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CHURCH MUSIC

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CHURCH MUSIC

BY

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and Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Lincoln

LONDON: ROBERT SCOTT
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To
THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
OF
THE SUMMER SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC,
TO
WHOSE CO-OPERATION AND FORBEARANCE
THE AUTHOR OWES
WHATEVER OF GOOD THESE PAGES MAY CONTAIN,
THIS HUMBLE ESSAY
IS
DEDICATED

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FOREWORD

A.M.D.G.



TO write a book on such a subject as this, even on so slight a scale, may seem a gross impertinence in one who can hardly claim the title of an amateur in music. And so it would be, if a knowledge of the theory and practice of that art were the first requirement in a writer who deals with the place music should occupy in the Church's services. This little book, however, may serve a useful purpose, if it does no more than raise a protest against that false doctrine.

Church Music should not be sought in the Encyclopædia as a sub-heading of the article on Music, but rather under the letter L, as a department of Liturgy. For that is its proper place.

Music has more than one rôle. There is absolute music, such as the symphonies and quartets one may hear in the concert-room ; there is the music of the stage, where it has to be the handmaid of the drama ; and there is the music of the Church, where its function is to minister to the worthy performance of certain solemn rites and offices, which in strictness are entirely independent of its aid. When it is

used in this last connexion it has to justify itself, not only as a branch of the art of sweet sounds, but even more as having, and keeping, a legitimate place in the art of public worship.

That this is the true state of affairs finds recognition in the fact that it is the parson and not the organist who is responsible for the music that is performed in church. He alone has the ultimate right to say at what services, or at what parts of the service, room is to be found for it, and also of what nature it shall be. No doubt this right is one which should be exercised in a constitutional fashion, a thing more possible now that we have Parochial Church Councils. But the responsibility is his, just because he is the leader and guardian of the worship of the people of God. This shows plainly that we have here a liturgical problem, prior to the strictly musical one.

The following pages are designed to bring some assistance, if it may be, to the parish priest who is conscious of his responsibility, but who realizes that he is handling a delicate and thorny matter. Often enough he is in the same case as one who has received the charge of an ancient, lovely, ivy-clad church. A great affection has grown up around it, which extends from the church to the ivy. He fears that this grasping vegetable is crushing the life out of the old building, but he is unwilling to offend tender, if sentimental, feelings. The time must come when the knife has to be called in. But it has to be used with care, lest, as in other reformations, the last state be worse than the first.

He will be glad then of an opportunity of talking it over with one who has had difficulties similar to his own, and is able to see the thing from his standpoint.

There is many a church where the service is so music-laden that the true nature of the Liturgy is obscured ; but the priest knows not where to begin. It was thought that he might be more helped by one who looked at the subject from the standpoint of an ordinary parish priest, with an interest in liturgical matters, rather than by one who was learned in the mysteries of keys and modulations, of harmony and counterpoint.

The foregoing observations are not meant to imply that the choirmaster has no province of his own. He has a very distinct and important function, on which the priest, *qua* priest, has no right to trespass. All that relates to the actual musical performance is his ground, and if he is to do the best work of which he is capable, he must be as free and unfettered in it as possible.

Between the part that is plainly the priest's and that which is as plainly the choirmaster's, there is a hinterland of disputable ground. It consists in the choice of music. If peace and edification are to be achieved here, the only way is frank comradeship and mutual understanding. If in these pages any principles, which will help towards this desirable consummation, have been reached by the Divine assistance, the author will feel more than rewarded. He offers it as a humble contribution to the due hallowing of God's name.

CHURCH MUSIC

CHAPTER I

OF MUSIC IN CHURCH

IT is commonly assumed that music is an inseparable part of public worship. So much is this the case that it would be no exaggeration to say that an Englishman's choice of a place wherein to conduct his devotions is determined either by the preacher or the singing.

And yet a moment's reflection will show that neither sermon nor song is an essential, and it is only an ingrained habit of regarding "church" as a thing primarily devised for the intriguing of a congregation that has led us into the delusion. For leaving on one side the "Friends," those rare spirits for whom no uttered sound is needed, we find that in all religious bodies the most intense and sacred moments of their devotion are commonly ministered to by the speaking voice alone. Communion and prayer-meeting are alike unaccompanied by song. The daily Mass and the daily Office, which are the staple of so many devout lives, seem

to get along very well without its aid. Thus the employment of music requires justification, and it would be well if those who were responsible for its use were continually to ask themselves the question, "Why do we have it at all?"

For we have to recognize in the history of Christianity the strange fact that there has constantly been a shrinking from music in any shape or form.

The Puritans in the seventeenth century had a great "controversie of singing." Many thought that singing with the voice interfered fatally with singing in the heart. In 1696 we find one Isaac Marlow, a Baptist, resisting singing because in the Apostolic Church it was only due to an extraordinary gift of the Spirit. Moreover, a set form of words in artificial rhymes must be wrong. Anyhow, being, like most true Puritans, an inveterate sacerdotalist, such singing as there was should be by the minister alone, and not the work of a promiscuous assembly which would include even women, though apostolic injunction bade them be silent in the church. Events showed, however, that he gave his book too optimistic a title when he named it *Controversie of Singing Brought to an End*.

Fox, of course, opposed singing from a book, putting it on a level with images and crosses and the sprinkling of infants. But his *Journal* bears witness to the practice all the same, though the references had been carefully censored till the publication of the critical edition by the Cambridge University Press in 1911.

It must not, however, be supposed that this dislike was a peculiar fad of the Puritans. Or rather it must be remembered that not all Puritans are Protestants. We find the same suspicion among the early Christians, to whom music suggested the theatre and feasting.

The causes which underlay so persistent and recurring a suspicion are worth inquiring into. In the primitive days it was the fear of heathen influence, or the dread of heresy which, as in the case of the Arians, had endeavoured to win converts by tickling the ear.

But that is hardly sufficient to explain so constant a tendency on the part of authority to curb, if not to abolish, the use of music. There was something deeper behind, and that was the fear of religion being dominated by emotion. It is the innate rationality of Christianity which is responsible. The words of S. Paul express it, "I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also."¹ Religion without emotion is unthinkable, at any rate, the Christian religion would be impossible without it. But the mind must dominate. It is true that both thoughts and feelings are raised by devotion to a plane beyond the range of adequate human expression. Yet Christianity is the religion of the Word made flesh, the Essence of the Godhead is expressed therein, and the wisdom of the Church has led it always to keep as near as possible to that chartered manifestation of the boundless Glory. In the territory of human personality the under-

¹ Cf. Psalm xlvii. 7.

standing is regent. The senses are the avenue of approach, but they must not blockade the citadel. On the other hand, it is equally true that the understanding must be no tyrant, else the rationality of Christ becomes the rationalism of Puritanism.

The Church, being Catholic, was saved from rationalism and Puritanism. It saw in music a treasure, one that wanted watching, it is true, but one which it would be folly to lose. Almost the first thing that we hear about Christians from an outside source is Pliny's statement that they sang a hymn to Christ as God. And when the Peace of the Church came under Constantine the old churches were rebuilt, while new ones sprang up in hundreds all over the Empire. At once the arts were pressed into the service, and these new structures glittered with mosaic and marble and gold, lit up by many silver lamps.

Psalmody had already become a fixed practice amongst the faithful, but now music, like the other arts, took a leap forward in the service of the Church. "The century which created the great basilicas also inaugurated an artistic development of the liturgical chant."¹

Thus music established its place, as it was bound to do, when the Church undertook the Titan task of sanctifying the whole of human life.

The objections and suspicions, to which reference has been made, only indicate how difficult the task was, and is. They do not mean that it should be abandoned.

¹ Dr. P. Wagner.

We have arrived at the present moment at a point in history where Christian feeling is slowly but surely rising in revolt once more against the false standards of music in public worship. An article by the present Poet Laureate, Dr. Robert Bridges, in the first number of the *Journal of Theological Studies*, October, 1899, came as a revelation of the profound dissatisfaction which many thoughtful people were feeling. It was even more remarkable for the clearness with which it indicated the true principles which needed recovery. At the same time he illustrated his thesis in the most admirable manner by the publication of the *Yattendon Hymnal*. Since then there have been many signs of the growth of a reforming spirit. One is the number of hymn-books which have appeared, showing evident signs of Dr. Bridges' inspiration, each with its different excellence. *Hymns, Ancient and Modern*, boldly led the way, and produced a book which as far as the music was concerned deserved a better fate, though the spirit of professionalism was not entirely lacking.

The English Hymnal (1906), *The Oxford Hymn-book* (1908), *The Songs of Syon* (1910) followed in rapid succession. The Church Music Society was, meanwhile, doing a valuable work of education by its pamphlets. The campaign of Mr. Royle Shore stirred up interest. Thus, when the Summer School of Church Music came on the scene in 1913, the field was prepared, and those who were concerned in it received ample evidence of the change of heart that was taking place.

These facts are mentioned because every new movement is readily dubbed an affair of a few cranks. But a disturbance so continuous and spreading cannot be thus easily dismissed. It is not due to any one mind, nor to any one set of musicians or ecclesiastics. The spontaneity and variety of the support it has received go far to show that it is a movement of the Spirit. As in all revolutions, there are differences as to the remedies, Maximalists and Cadets. Though the sympathies of the writer of this little book are with the left, yet he would prefer a gradual revolution as less likely to play into the hands of reaction. Peaceful penetration will accomplish wonders, though there are certain positions which can only be captured by a liberal use of high explosive.

The movement is not confined to England.

One of the creditable episodes of the pathetic pontificate of Pius X was the war he waged on degraded music. But even the great authority of the Pope did not avail to impose good music on his Church. It was in a large measure defeated by what Mr. Alfred Fawkes has oddly called the "common sense" of the clergy, though common obstinacy would perhaps have been a juster term. When inquiring once of a connoisseur in a great foreign city where I could hear plain-song properly sung, I was told, "Well, of course, they do it at the Cathedral." I was about to set off thither at once, when my interlocutor made the laconic remark, "I should not advise you to go there." The reason was perhaps supplied by a distinguished French

friend who, on being asked why the *Motu Proprio* had so little effect on the cathedrals of his country, merely replied, "*Mais les vénérables chanoines.*" The thought occurred that human nature was much the same in all countries, though in England one might have to add "*et les chanoinesses.*"

In this country the movement is on more solid ground, just because it does not come from above, but has sprung up from below and very largely among the laity. This is in accordance with the genius of the English Church. But the time is fast arriving when the support of the official world must be given, if the full harvest is to be reaped. The "Congregation of Rites," which we so clamorously need, will here have one of its greatest, though one of its most delicate, activities.

What, then, are the general principles which the reformers desire to see accepted?

First we may certainly say, music in church is an "oblation presented solemnly to the Most High God." The words are Mr. Fuller-Maitland's, and occur in the first of the Church Music Society's pamphlets. He is there speaking only of non-congregational music, but the principle is as true of the people's part. Mr. Fuller-Maitland's axiom may seem to many a platitude. But if we consider the consequences that flow from it we shall recognize that it is one of those truisms which people are content to treat as if they were not true.

For, in the first place, if the music we perform in church is something we are offering to God, what that music is matters. And, moreover, since it is

so essentially religious a thing, it is one of the duties of the parson to have some ideals in the business. This does not mean that he should necessarily be a "musical" man. Indeed, it is much safer if he is not. Otherwise we may find him singing Liddle's "Abide With Me" as an anthem, or destroying the proportions of a fourteenth century chancel by filling it with an enormous organ, at the console of which, so as to be near the reading-desk, he will himself take his seat. We do not expect a parson to be an expert needle-woman, but we do expect him to be able to obtain a chasuble of decent shape, size and colour. How many of us parsons do really think that it matters what music we allow? Or if we do, to put it crudely, we think it matters to the congregation but not to God.

Many pride themselves on their indifference, as though it was something beneath the notice of a spiritual person. The Puritan who denounced all music was a less dangerous person than such a one. Many a priest will be most particular about the behaviour of a choirboy and the cleanliness of his surplice, while what that same choirboy sings will appear a matter of supreme unimportance, so long as it be in tune. So strong is the instinct to make clean the outside of the cup and platter.

Another consequence that emerges from the application of this principle is, that what is sung should be the best. But, as soon as that is said, misunderstandings have to be removed. On the one hand there are those who say, "Are we right

in assuming that what God likes best is the best music? ” To which the answer is, that it is not unreasonable to suppose that, God having given man taste and judgment and skill, He should require the best that can be done under the circumstances. What is best for a cathedral is not necessarily the best in the parish church. Their aim and ideal are different. But music that is bad in one is bad in the other. The “ Old Hundredth ” is good in either, so is the “ Peregrine ” tone, even in its anglicanised form.

We may now perhaps suggest some further principles which would also find wide acceptance.

A great deal of stress must be laid upon the clause “ under the circumstances. ” They are infinitely various. The object of a cathedral is the offering to God of a daily round of praise and prayer in the most splendid way possible. In such places music difficult both to performer and to the uneducated mind will find as natural a home as splendid and elaborate ceremonial. They are well endowed¹ with a staff of clergy and singers sufficient to carry out both duties. The same may be said of certain large parish churches which approximate in establishment and function to cathedrals. At present in such churches the music seems overweighted. But the cure is not to be found in spoiling the music by a muddled attempt at popularization. What is needed to restore the balance is to bring the ceremonial up to the level of the music. A visit to Westminster Cathedral will show how

¹ This is unfortunately not so true as it was.

satisfactory a result can be produced even with the Roman rite, which is jejune and confused compared with its mediæval ancestors.

Cathedrals may, of course, rightly have, over and above their main duty, services of a type which are possible of appreciation by less educated minds. But even then in those splendid fanes the music should surely be worthy. Simplicity will be their note, but that massive simplicity which springs from breadth and strength.

If simplicity is to be the note of such services in cathedrals, ten times more will it be the aim in all but a few parish churches. Here, again, we who have to be responsible for their direction will find it a good working principle to insist that our music shall not exceed our ceremonial in elaboration.

Good ceremonial is direct and keeps close to utility. The music should do the same. And so we shall not sing elaborate "Kyries" at the same time as we allow the choir to escape after the prayer for the Church Militant. And we shall set our face against great "Magnificats" unattended by incense.

If we aim at simplicity, we can boldly face our choir (our organist will probably be with us, at any rate, in secret) with the knowledge that the really good musical judges are on our side.

"It is too readily taken for granted," says Mr. Harvey Grace, "that people who are keen musicians therefore enjoy an elaborate service. Even if the music is of the best, both in choice and performance, musical people are not necessarily edified."

For after all, we come back to the great object

of going to church, which is God Himself. And the musical man, if he is a true Christian, will desire, as much as the unmusical, that all that is said and done there should lead us to forget ourselves in contemplation and praise of our Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier. And, therefore, both will desire music which does not force attention to itself, but allows the soul to pass as through a door into that upper world which is our true home.

To recapitulate :—

(1) Let us continually remember why we have music. It is not essential, but it is immensely helpful.

(2) Its purpose is to make a more worthy and intelligent offering to God.

(3) It is to be the best possible in the circumstances.

(4) Those circumstances are the capacity and the understanding of the performers, amongst whom, in most churches, the congregation are to be reckoned the major part.

(5) Music should not exceed ceremonial.

(6) Simplicity and intelligibility are the truest clues in both.

CHAPTER II

OF CATHOLIC MUSIC

THE first thing that confronts the parson when he begins to think about music in the Church is the Liturgy. Catholic worship is, in the main, liturgical worship. Other devotions, such as hymns, prayer-meetings, rosaries, and so forth, are not excluded, but their place is secondary. They have always tended to overlay the essential worship of the Church. People have thought it difficult or dull, and turned to something supposed to be more popular.

But liturgical worship remains the main offering.

This offering falls into two classes: the Eucharist and the Offices. Both of these are ancient and continuous elements of Catholic worship. Mattins and Mass were a regular tradition of our forefathers here in England.¹

¹ Cf. *The Clerk's Book*, Henry Bradshaw Society, p. 82, where a note from the churchwardens' accounts of S. Michael's, Cornhill, written in 1538, reminds us that "Richard Atfield, sometime parson of the church, . . . with consent of the bishop, and other worshipful men of the same parish hath ordained and established Mattins, High Mass, and Evensong to be sung daily, in the year 1375." The parishioners of Colebrooke in Exeter complained that their vicar did not sing mattins on the Great Feasts with music (*cum nota*).¹

Let us take the Mass first.

The rapid spread of "Choral Celebrations" has made the question of music for the Eucharist acute. What things are to determine the parish priest's decision? Ultimately the responsibility rests with him, and there are certain things as to which he will want a say, whether he regards himself as musical or not.

The first thing that he will keep before him is that the words "Choral Celebration," and still more "Choral Communion" represent a lop-sided notion. The tradition of the Church has always been to celebrate the holy mysteries with as much solemnity and dignity as was possible under the circumstances. You could not do in a parish church what would be demanded in some great abbey or cathedral, but you did the best you could.

Thus the busy liturgical antiquary of the ninth century, Amalarius, says the blessing by the Bishops or presbyters, whereby the bread and wine are consecrated to become the means of salvation for the people, is sufficient by itself. Singers and readers and the other ministers are not essential to the rite. But he obviously thinks it much better to have them, and regards Solemn Mass as the norm.

At some date, difficult to determine, but probably during the later Middle Ages, a distinction grew up between *missa alta* and *missa bassa*. This led to a great confusion of thought in the popular mind. Low Mass became the norm. When it was desired to have something more festive, music was added, and perhaps some of the other accompani-

ments of Solemn Mass. As in some other matters connected with the Eucharist, e.g., the words of consecration, the makers of our Prayer Book accepted, without a sufficiently careful scrutiny, the late mediæval degradation to which they were accustomed. And so our present Prayer Book, which seems to assume a Mass with a priest and server only, lends itself rather easily to the non-descript conception known as *Missa cantata*, which is what many of our "Choral Celebrations" really are.

"*Missa cantata*," Martin Gerbert, the learned eighteenth-century Prince-Abbot of S. Blaise, tells us, is a "mix-up" of *missa privata* and *missa solemnis*. It is like the latter, in that there is singing, and like the former, in that there are no sacred ministers beside the priest.

"A sung Mass (*missa cantata*) is a modern compromise," says Dr. Fortescue. "It is really a low Mass, since the essence of high Mass is not the music, but the deacon and subdeacon."

The first thing, then, is to get back behind these mediæval and renaissance conceptions to the ideal of Solemn Mass, which the First Prayer Book hints at, when it says, "And where there be many Priests, or Deacons, there so many shall be ready to help the Priest in the ministration as shall be requisite; and shall have upon them likewise the vestures appointed for their ministry, that is to say, albs with tunacles."

This point is worth labouring, partly because we are in great danger of a widespread adoption of a corrupt system, contrary to the older and sounder

tradition of the Church, and partly because this corrupt following of later practice opens the door to a musical tyranny from which we must shake ourselves free. In a word, the altar must dominate the organ, and the choir learn that they are not the only ministers of the sanctuary.¹

But it should be noted that just because Solemn Mass is the normal type, it follows that the normal thing is for it to be sung. This can be seen from the way in which the phrase to "sing Mass" established itself. Gerbert quotes an interesting decision of a council held in 1296, which decrees that on ferial days when many masses are sung, one mass in each church shall be sung in a loud voice (*alta voce*), but the others in a low voice (*dimissa voce*) without sound, or only just audible (*modice audiatur*). Two quotations by Ducange will serve to bring this out even more clearly. One is from a collection of rules. "*Nullus cantet nisi jejunus : nullus cantet qui non communicet.*" The other is from a fifteenth-century French MS.: "*Durant qu'on dira ladite grant messe, seront chantées deux messes basses de requiem à deux prochains autels.*"

A saying of Remigius of Auxerre further illustrates the use. In his *Explicatio Missæ* he speaks of the custom which has come into the church of *singing the consecration silently* (*ut tacite ipsa obsecratio atque consecratio a sacerdote cantetur*) lest such sacred

¹ "Sie ist zuerst eine liturgische und dann erst eine Musicalische Sache." *Die Kirchenmusik nach der Willen der Kirche*. Paul Krutschak, Regensburg, 1889.

² *De Cantu*, L. II, P. I, p. 356.

words should be dishonoured (*ne verba tam sacra vilescent*).

They show two things: (1) that singing was so much the tradition that "to sing" is equivalent to "to celebrate"; and (2) that the introduction of the "natural" voice had produced a confusion in which "singing" and "saying" were used indiscriminately.

When this question is settled, and it has become clear to all concerned that the Eucharist is a liturgical before it is a musical act, you can then go on to consider various requirements that must be made with regard to the music.

(1) The *first* of these undoubtedly is that *it must respect the words*. It is impossible to emphasize this too strongly or to exaggerate the stress that has been laid upon it by the authorities of the Church. The words of the Liturgy, it has always been felt, had a sacredness second only to those of Scripture.

A long catena of authorities could be quoted to prove that this was the Christian tradition. Athanasius desired that there should be but a slight modulation of the voice, "more like one reading than singing." So Augustine tells us, and thinks it himself the safer way.

It was this principle that Cranmer recalled. The Liturgy must be intelligible. So he writes to the King with regard to the processions he had translated for festival days: ¹ "But in mine opinion

¹ Letter to Henry VIII, 1545. Cranmer, *Works*, Vol. II, p. 412.

the song that shall be made thereunto would not be full of notes, but as near as may be, for every syllable a note, so that it may be sung distinctly and devoutly." The injunctions of Queen Elizabeth followed the same line.¹

And in the eighteenth century Pope Benedict XIV, in his efforts to rescue Divine worship from the weight of profane music with which it had become overloaded, insisted on the subordination of the music to the liturgical text, *ut verba perfecte planeque intelligantur*.

(2) It follows from the subordination of music to rite that it should never be allowed to hold up the action. Ministers should not be kept standing at the altar (or anywhere else) while choir and people are finishing their singing or the organist is letting himself go on his instrument.

The history of the Introit (or Office, as it was called in England, the custom came from Normandy) is interesting in regard to this point. It consisted of a psalm, with an antiphon between each verse, which was sung during the procession of the Pope from the sacristy to the altar. When he arrived there, he signalled to the leader of the singers to start the "Gloria," apparently without regard to the point reached in the psalm. It was the shorter ceremonies of the parish church which finally fixed the Introit in its present form with a single verse. The "Kyrie" had a similar history. Thus Pius X followed the tradition when he said: "It is not lawful to keep the priest at the altar waiting on

¹ Alcuin *Club Collection* XVI. Vol. III, p. 23, cf. p. 136.

account of the chant or the music." *Motu Proprio*, VII. 22. November, 1903.

(3) Then, again, the music should not take too long, not only because it holds up the action and so disfigures the rite, but also because of the weariness induced in the congregation. Bishop Horne, in his injunctions for his Cathedral of Winchester, in 1562, said that the music should be "without any reports or repeatings." And there must be many who have attended services in cathedrals who will endorse his judgment. People's power of attention, especially in regard to elaborate music, is usually exceedingly moderate.

The factor of time is of importance also. We live in such a busy age that it is really the case that men and women of goodwill have but little time to give to the religious duties which are dear to them, if they are also to get sufficient rest. The parish priest will not desire that they should be compelled to make a *missa bassa* their only worship. Therefore the aim should be a Solemn Mass which does not occupy with a sermon more than one hour and a quarter.

(4) A fourth consideration of great moment, which really underlies much that has been said, is the part the congregation should play in the service. That this should be a great one is plainly the ideal of the Book of Common Prayer. It was, indeed, one of the principal *religious* objects of the English Reformation in the sixteenth century, that the people should join in the services of the Church with heart and voice. And it was one of the things

which the Puritans most violently resisted. Their objection to the Litany lay in the fact that the people were allowed to pray, on the ground that it "was not consonant with Scripture, which makes the minister the mouth of the people to God in prayer."

But this sacerdotalism was not the tradition of the Catholic Church. The Creed was sung by all when first introduced, as Amalarius witnesses: "After Christ has spoken to his people, it is right that they should sweetly and earnestly profess their faith. And so it is fitting that when they have heard the Gospel, the people should with clear voice make their declaration of faith in it."¹ This was true of all the ordinary or invariable parts, the "Kyrie," the "*Gloria*" and the "*Sanctus*."

This communal action is, of course, of the essence of the Communion, and that aspect which catches the attention and impresses the mind of the outside observer. So we find a writer in the Literary Supplement of *The Times* saying: "The rites of the Church are a religious drama. It is one of the great purposes of drama to induce spiritual unity between actor and audience. The latter should not be mere spectators."² Nor, it may be added, hearers.

(5) There is a last and most important requirement. - The music should be ecclesiastical in character. It should not suggest the theatre or

¹ Amalarius, *Ecloga de officio Missæ*, Migne, P.L. CV, 1323. Cf. Gerbert, *De Cantu*, I, p. 429.

² October 12, 1916, Article on Baksky, *The Path of the Russian Stage*.

the pier, or even the drawing-room. It is not meant that there should be no place for "popular" music. That question will be referred to again. But the music of the Mass should be, in the main, that which is born of the Church's faith. It should be impersonal, like the Church's prayers. And if, moreover, like them, it is of unknown authorship, it will come with the greater authority as being the expression of the soul of the Christian people.

Such music exists; music which even in the judgment of a great Jewish musician, Halévy, is "the most beautiful religious music which exists upon the earth." The Catholic Church has been a great patron of the arts. Some of the most beautiful pictures and sculpture are dedicated to her service. But in music she has invented a language of her own. This language has grown out of her Liturgy. It is as much a part of it as the skin is of the body. It is like the rays of the sun or the branches of the vine.

The music we mean is that known variously as plain-song or Gregorian music. Let us notice how precisely it fulfils the conditions we have laid down.

(1) It is, by the confession of Halévy and many others of the first rank, the most religious music there is. Its use in *Parsifal*, e.g., shows this. But the truth of the principle is not only recognized by the elect. It is perceived equally by the crowd. In the most ordinary theatre, if there is occasion to introduce a religious service, the appropriate atmosphere is always indicated by music of this type, even though in a degraded form. Even the

most commonplace stage-manager would hardly employ an Anglican chant for this purpose. Plain-song stands for the solemnity and unearthliness of religion. It further fulfils the other conditions which we have laid down.

(2) It is subordinate to the words, for it has grown out of them.

(3) It takes very little time to sing, and

(4) It can be sung by the congregation.

Let us suppose, then, that the parish priest gets hold of a plain-song setting of the Holy Communion. He goes with it to his organist, who, poor man, has never seen such a thing in his life before. What reception will he meet with? He will probably find objections raised on two main grounds. The choir cannot sing it, and the congregation won't like it. "But why," the priest will ask, "can't the choir sing it?" "Why, because there are no bars. How can you expect them to sing stuff which has neither rhythm nor accent? Moreover, there are no rests. It is bare melody and bad melody at that. And as for the congregation, how can you expect them to like something which is quite tuneless and simply a series of dismal wailings? Besides," and here the organist will deliver his final bomb, "it belongs to the age of barbarism. See the great masters of modern music, Bach, Handel, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Wagner; they have advanced far beyond this childish language. It is folly to try to go back on all this."

Perhaps, however, the priest's Anglican organist friend may have made more research into the

matter. He may even have read the article on music in the *History of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IX, p. 19 ff., where Mr. H. Westerby makes this amazing statement: "It should, however, be remembered that plain-song is essentially men's song (i.e., of monastic origin) and fitted principally for male voices; and to have the proper effect it must be rendered in unison by voices in which the male element predominates."

The priest, when he hears this, may perhaps dimly feel that seeing that his choir consists only of men and boys, that does not matter. It may also cross his mind that monastic communities of women are at least as numerous and as ancient as those of men. Perhaps he has even heard the sweet voices of the sisters at S. Peter's, Kilburn, or the Benedictine nuns who remained in the Rue Monsieur in Paris in spite of all laws of separation of Church and State. He may even recall pictures in manuscripts where amongst the singers gathered round some great Gradual the boys were plainly in the majority.

For the time being the priest may have to retreat. He will look round, take stock of the difficulties of terrain, and search for new weapons. It is only too true he feels that the congregation will not like it. Congregations do not, as a rule, take readily to anything that is new, and religion is a conservative thing. Still less are they likely to take to it if the choir sings it half-heartedly. Yet he is unshaken in his conviction that he has found the true ecclesiastical music, and so he goes deeper into the matter.

He must persuade the organist first. He begins on the point of rhythm. "What do you mean by rhythm?" he says. "You mean a constantly recurring beat, three in the bar or four in the bar. That is all right, if what we were going to sing was verse, which has a recurring beat. But it is not. It is prose. Prose has a rhythm of its own; this music follows that rhythm. If people can keep together while saying the Creed why cannot they do so in singing it to music which follows the natural accent? Besides, recitative is an element of the most popular 'classical' composers. I find that Dom Janssens says: 'Attentive study of the masters of modern music is sufficient to convince one that free rhythm is a powerful element of beauty. That which distinguishes the melodies of the great composers, in particular Bach, Handel, Beethoven, Haydn, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Wagner, etc., that which raises them above the level of ordinary productions, is the subtle and delicate movement of the rhythm, which seems at times to emancipate itself from all the shackles of measure, as if the genius of the master had felt the need of breaking every bond in his dash for full liberty. The recitative character that Wagner regards as a fundamental principle of dramatic art, is a manifest approximation to plain-chant, a return to the spirit which animates the old Gregorian melodies.'

"And as for saying that it is barbarous and out of date, I have just come across two French series of monographs on *The Masters of Music*. I do not find included in this list Elvey or Ouseley, or

Woodward, nor even Wesley, Attwood or Stanford. But I do find that side by side with César Franck, Moussorgsky and Brahms, there is in one list a book called *L'Art Grégorien*, and in the other *La Musique Grégorien*.¹ So, apparently, the French regard plain-song both as music and as art, and music and art which has a living interest. And M. Amédée Gastoué, in *L'Art Grégorien*, remarks how striking it is to find 'not only the tonality but even the rhythm and the forms of this ancient art appearing in works of a Vincent d'Indy or a Debussy. At the moment when music, while succumbing to the development of an excessive chromaticism and an unheard-of polyphony, appears to be threatened by a return to a savage barbarism, what a curious antithesis, worthy of the attention of alert minds, is offered by the mixture of these antique forms where there breathes anew with such freshness that ancient Gregorian art, which is eternally young.' So go off and hear Beecham conduct *Tristan*, or Wood *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*, and let us discuss the matter again."

Let us suppose that the organist is won over to making the experiment. There still remains the impregnable rock of the congregation. If they have never been accustomed to a sung Eucharist, the way is comparatively easy. They have nothing to unlearn, no old favourites to dislodge. In that case let them get *The Plain-song of the Holy Communion*, price 7d., from Messrs. Mowbray, and start

¹ *Les Maitres de la Musique*, Felix Alcan, Paris, and *Les Musiciens Célèbres*, Henri Laurens, Paris.

on the old Sarum Creed and the simplest "Gloria." A good plan is to make the choir recite the Creed together in a measured way in the speaking voice first, and then get them to put the notes on when they have got hold of the essential rhythm.

If the custom of singing the Mass to "Anglican Services" has prevailed, there will be greater difficulties both with choir and congregation. The former will be so accustomed to playing ducks and drakes with the words that they will find it very difficult to put them first, and the men will miss their part-singing. A *modus vivendi*¹ on the latter point will have to be established, unless the parson can convert the men to the idea of Divine service, or perhaps regards its religious performances as more important than the retention of two or three basses and tenors of inferior quality, whose view of the choir is that it is a glee-club.

Even if an agreement be reached, two problems will still remain for the parson. They are problems inherent in the use of plain-song, whether for the Mass or the Offices. But they may well be faced here.

(1) How should it be accompanied? This is a matter which his organist will raise at once, or if he does not, the parson's own ears will raise it for him, as he listens to the good man's efforts at wrestling with this foreign musical language. For the crucial difficulty lies in that fact. Plain-song is not more difficult to accompany than other forms

¹ A possible *modus vivendi* will be indicated in Chapter IV. p. 97.

of music, perhaps even less than many. But it requires a knowledge of its peculiar syntax. Spanish may be no more difficult to speak than French. But a knowledge of the one does not qualify you to conduct a conversation in the other. Where in this matter is wisdom to be found? It is unfortunately the case that the musical schools of England do not provide instruction in the art. Like all arts it cannot be learnt from books. The grammar may be there acquired. But for profitable performance the "direct method" is needed. The only hope is to get into touch with some musician who is soaked in the subject and can show in practice what is to be aimed at. It was in order to provide such personal contact that the Summer School of Church Music came into existence. But something on a much bigger and more effective scale must be done. The remedy will be dealt with more fully in a later chapter.

Certain general principles on which the experts are agreed may, however, be commended to the beginner.

(1) A light accompaniment is the ideal. It must float, not plod. Consequently the 16ft. pedal should be sparingly used.

(2) Play quietly, except under special circumstances. Use quiet stops, and vary them, flute, reed, clarinet, etc.

(3) Keep in the mode, as a rule; but see below.

(4) Try to make changes of chord coincide with the verbal accent.

(5) Use legitimate counterpoint chords and

passing notes, and avoid dominant sevenths. Try to substitute other cadences for the usual dominant tonic.

(6) Be economical in using chords. One chord may serve to harmonize two or three notes in the melody.

(7) Avoid the "four-part harmony exercise" accompaniment. This is generally stiff and does not "run" well. Occasionally vary four-part work with three-part and even two-part.

(8) Cultivate the art of playing chords *round* a melody. The melody need not always be played in the top part of the accompaniment; indeed, it need not actually be played at all. Occasionally the tune may be put in the bass part.

(9) Don't be pedantic, e.g., consecutive fifths were used for centuries before a more modern technique forbade them. They can be used effectively in accompanying plain-song. The same may be said of octaves.

(10) Silence is sometimes the very best form of accompaniment; so is playing in octaves.¹

Anything beyond this gets into the realm of questions of taste. And there, naturally, the doctors

¹ It will be observed, that if the above principles are correct, the harmonies usually found in hymn-books do not form good models; for they are commonly at variance with all the above principles. When I asked the late Mr. W. J. Birkbeck, himself a distinguished amateur performer and connoisseur in the art, the reason for this, his answer was, "You would never dare to write down what you would actually play." Progress seems to demand a Daniel!

are in vigorous disagreement. The straitest sect will not allow any accompaniment that is not in the mode. This may be very beautiful. When well done, there is a severity and restraint about it that has a charm all its own. Others, recognizing what a great opportunity the unison singing of the plain-chant offers to the instrumentalist, introduce boldly the most modern and thrilling effects.

If the parson is unwise enough to allow himself to be entangled in this controversy, he will regret the day he ever "took up" plain-song. His wisest course is to adopt a liberal standpoint, and allow his organist all possible latitude, in hopes that he may by that induce him to believe, if he does not already do so, that there are more kinds of beauty than one. One general principle he may safely uphold. Only those should wander outside the modes who know what the modes are. If to do so be sin, in this case *pecca fortiter* is a wise counsel. Let it be done deliberately, clearly, firmly, with the eyes open, by one who knows what he is about. It is the sins that we know not of, that are in this matter the worst.

The consideration of this point leads on naturally to the second difficulty which our parson will have to face.

(2) What is the true method of performing plain-song? Here again there is a body of doctrine on which all would be agreed, as that (i) the true text must be used. The researches of the Benedictines of Solesmes and others have done a great service in this regard. It is possible that, when the

late Dr. Bannister's monumental work on the neumes has been digested by another generation of musical experts, modifications will have to be made in the Vatican texts, but for the present we are safe in assuming that we have something sufficiently near the real thing to form a working basis. The debt we owe to Dom Pothier and Dom Mocquereau amongst Frenchmen, and in this country to Dr. G. H. Palmer, is immense.

These restorers of the days that are past have not only given back to us the texts, but they have shown us the meaning of their rhythm. And so in the second place (ii) all are agreed (*a*) as to the place and nature of the accent in the plain-chant, the main principle being that it falls on the first of a group of notes. (*b*) A further point is that, as far as time value is concerned, all notes are equal. There are no bars, and therefore no recurring or periodic rhythm. This is due to the fact that the text is prose, not verse. And (*c*) it is the text that gives life and meaning to the music. It is not the case that there is no rhythm in plain-song, as some falsely assert. But it is a rhythm which can be discovered by those who study the notes in close relation to the words. As Dom Kienle says : ¹ " A sacred melody which has been sung many times with the text, and of which one has penetrated the spirit, could very well be sung without the text ; it will keep the charm of its rhythm, indeed it will gain by this exercise in ease and beauty. On the contrary, if you begin by singing the melody

¹ *Choralschule* (French translation), p. 97.

without the text, you will scarcely succeed after long researches in discovering its exterior material rhythm ; the spiritual life, which is the true interior breath of it, will always remain hidden, and the melody deprived of life and colour."

(d) Another point on which all are agreed is that every phrase ends with a diminuendo.

But while these general principles form common ground among all serious lovers of the art, there is still a large scope for individuality in interpretation. This would be denied by some. But here it is necessary to warn the inexperienced parson of one terrible danger which lies in wait to destroy him, when he gaily "takes up" plain-song. That danger is the purist. It is impossible, as has already been said, to exaggerate the debt we owe to those who have during the last fifty years given back this great treasure to the Church. They have shown us both its meaning and its beauty. But their influence, as often with enthusiasts, has not been without harm to the cause to which they were devoted. They have set up a standard of "correctness" of the severest type. Anything which did not conform to this in the minutest detail was impossible and absurd. There was much excuse for them. Plain-song had become so degraded that violent measures were necessary, if musicians and worshippers were to be aroused from their dogmatic slumbers. The former had cause for their view that plain-song was not a form of art. The latter bowed before an idol of correctness, which simulated the authority of the Catholic Church.

But now the victory is won. The musical world is coming more and more to see that plain-song is a form of art worthy of their attention, not only as an interesting survival, but as full of suggestion for new developments.¹ The religious world is more difficult to deal with. To the musician the one standard to apply is that of beauty. If the music answers that test, it establishes its position. But another thought complicates the issue in the mind of the Churchman. He is dominated by a desire for "correctness" which has no relation to æsthetic judgment. He wants to have the proper thing. It must have the authority of the Church behind it, and this authority must descend to every detail of its performance. This passion for uniformity has taken possession of a considerable number of minds in the English Church. They insist not only that the interpretation of dogmas shall be according to plan, but that the carrying out of ceremonies and the performance of music shall follow the same course. It is a natural craving and one that has been made respectable by the chaos from which it is a reaction. Heaven knows, for long the Church of England has been the prey of those who did that which was right in their own eyes. But in an endeavour to introduce order into our liberty we have to beware lest we fall into the opposite error.

¹ "It is now quite obvious that for melodic purposes such modes as the Doric and Phrygian were infinitely preferable to the Ionic" (i.e., the modern major scale). *The Art of Music*, by Sir Hubert Parry, London, 1893, 1st ed., p. 48. Notice the *author*, the *infinitely* and the *date*.

Uniformity pursued as an end leads to death. The only uniformity which is worth having is that which springs from an intelligent grasp of first principles. What these principles are, in the matter of plain-song, has been indicated above.

It is a point of great importance in any artistic matter that differences of interpretation are legitimate. You may not like Sir Henry Wood's conducting of Beethoven so much as Mr. Landon Ronald's. But it is, at any rate, arguable that he has made the beauties of that composer intelligible to a larger audience than a more "orthodox" interpretation would have done. Rigid orthodoxy in art is the mother of sterility. If plain-song is to live to-day as something more than a picturesque survival, the musicians of to-day must be allowed to interpret it according to their best judgment. Let the parson, then, refuse to be browbeaten by those who would tell him that such and only such is the true method of performance. Let him, greatly daring, try to judge for himself which is the most suitable to the circumstances of his church, and, if possible, secure the co-operation of a musician of an equally reasonable frame of mind. In dealing with plain-song he will do well to bear in mind one clear distinction, which will help him to make a decision as to methods of interpretation. There is, and there ought to be a great difference between the "atmosphere" of the church of a religious community and that of an ordinary parish. The Catholic Church, in its wisdom, has always refused to become a Puritan sect. It has always insisted that there are many

ways of worshipping the one God in the one Church, and it has striven to provide nourishment as far as possible for all sorts and conditions of men. And so it has found room for the enthusiast as well as for *l'homme moyen sensuel*. Each has been free to follow his religion up to his utmost limits, and has gained by intercommunion with the other. The distinction between the monk and the man living in the world is real and necessary. The one lives a life in which his whole energies are concentrated on the offering of a self-restrained impersonal devotion to God. The eternal, the ethereal are the hourly preoccupations of his mind. This is reflected in his worship and gives it a strange unearthly beauty. The man must be blind, indeed, to whom it makes no appeal. It has to be remembered that it was by and for men and women of this character that plain-song reached its highest development. The absence of periodic rhythm, the inconclusive endings, the smooth unemotional singing, the very monotony of much of the music, all these ministered to their vision and gave them exactly the language they required.

As a matter of fact, a different spirit engenders a different flavour even in religious communities, as those can taste who have been both to Cowley and to Kelham.

But the Christian in the ordinary world is not like that and should not be. His energies have to be devoted, not to contemplation, but to action. Under the great Artificer's eye he has to keep the business of the world going, whether he be doctor, or

lawyer, or dustman. He has his vocation and it is one which calls for self-expression, not for restraint. And so the worship that is suitable for a religious house is not suitable for a parish church. Of course, it is true that some priests endeavour to reproduce in their churches the atmosphere of the community chapel. Perhaps, seeing that we have so small a number of communities, it is well that this should be so. But they both must and ought to be a small minority of churches. What about the rest? We seem shut up to one of two conclusions. Either plain-song is unsuited to ordinary parish churches and must be reserved for those of religious communities, or those who employ plain-song in a parish church must be allowed a certain latitude in their interpretation of it. By which it is not meant that the notes must be altered, or their relation to the words, or any of the principles laid down on pp. 38 and 39, but simply that it must be allowed to be a vehicle of self-expression, as much as in the monastery it is an instrument of restraint.

Therefore the parson had better make up his mind what he is aiming at, and make for it, without heeding charges of vulgarity or dullness, whichever it may be. If he has a sympathetic church musician co-operating with him, he may be sure that he will get what he wants, and that wisdom will be justified of all her children. But a plea may be put in for the belief that vigour and vitality are the elements which we seem to need for the expression of God's Glory in this age.

But supposing all these difficulties are passed,

at what point is the parson to introduce plain-song ? One thing may be clearly said : " Don't begin with the Psalms." This may seem a hard doctrine. For it is just here that probably he feels intensely the need for reform. He may, e.g., have read the pungent remarks of Mr. Fuller-Maitland.¹ Or he may have come across the equally plain statement of Dr. C. W. Pearce : " It was not before I grew accustomed to take my place as an ordinary member of a parish church congregation that I fully realized the enormous incongruity, stupidity, and even wickedness of the futility of employing the Anglican

¹ " The Anglican chant is, of course, an anomaly from the historical point of view as well as from the artistic. It is, in its essence, an attempt to combine some of the features of plain-song with a metrical regularity which is entirely foreign to the spirit of plain-song. The jiggy chants which have to be changed so often in the course of a long Psalm because the congregation would get so tired of them if only one were kept for each Psalm, are supposed to be a source of genuine gratification to many worshippers ; but one cannot help suspecting that their popularity has been fostered by the circumstance that a chant is the very easiest thing in the world to write. Notwithstanding certain specimens which approach the simplicity of plain-song, such as Pelham Humfrey's " Grand Chant," some of us feel that the restoration of the real plain-song would not only be a positive gain in itself, but would have the additional advantage that it would sweep away the Anglican chant. As for the Double chant, association is the only thing which can excuse it, and the Quadruple chant is an invention which it is difficult to refer to in temperate language "—Church Music Society *Occasional Papers*, No. 1, p. 21. (Oxford Press.)

chant as a musical setting of the English prose Psalter. I candidly admit that participation in such an abuse of ordinary common sense is slightly more excusable when accompanying a choir. Then, in addition to the deadening effect of the past traditions of half a century, one's better judgment is temporarily warped and even stifled by continual efforts during service-time to bring out as far as possible the beauty and grandeur of the Psalms by means of one's accompaniment to the all too-familiar Anglican choir-chanting.

"But the full realization of this grotesque enormity grows upon me more and more when I hear the Cathedral Psalter and other Anglican 'pointing' Sunday after Sunday from the pews in the nave, instead of from one's own organ-loft. It is after many such experiences that I have come, by slow but sure degrees, to regard *all* Anglican systems of Psalm-pointing as little less than the invention of the great enemy of mankind, one of whose chief delights, as we all know, is to make fun of Holy Scripture."

Sir C. Villiers Stanford records an experience in his *Pages from an Unwritten Diary* which is interesting in this connexion: "Another distinguished visitor was Dvorak, who was nearly driven crazy by the chanting of the Psalms, which he thought simply a barbarous repetition of a poor tune."

But in spite of all this cloud of witnesses, the parson will be wise if he suffers the Psalms to Anglican chants for a while. They are deeply embedded in popular affection, and especially

perhaps in the affection of many whose knowledge of the Church and its teaching is somewhat vague. They are just the people who have to be most gently won to appreciation of the music of the universal Church. Therefore, if it is desired to acclimatize the attendants at Mattins and Evensong to this kind of thing, it would be far better to make a start with some of those splendid settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis with faux-bourbons by Byrd, Tallis, Gibbons and others, edited by Messrs. F. Burgess and Royle Shore.

Another good way of beginning is to introduce the plain-song Office hymns. This may well be done before the Psalms or Magnificat, even though the purist may be offended by the shock which the Anglican chant or setting will give afterwards. But it is also possible that the congregation may thus get to know and love the haunting melodies of the ancient song. Such a hymn as "Father, We Praise Thee" (*Nocte surgentes*), *English Hymnal* 165, will quickly win its way. Hymns are the part of religious music closest to the British heart, and if they can find that plain-song appeals to them here, they will gradually learn to endure it elsewhere. Anyhow, they will learn how extraordinarily wide of the mark is Mr. Westerby's statement that "Its vague rhythm is essentially fitted for prose only."¹ Indeed, in time they are more likely to come to the view of Mr. Robert Bridges: "Sing to any one a plain-song melody, *Ad cœnam Agni*, for instance, once or twice, and then Croft's 148th

¹ *Dict. of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II, p. 20.

Psalm. And give Croft the advantage of his original rhythm, not the mis-statement in *Hymns, Ancient and Modern*, No. 414. Croft will be undeniably fine and impressive, but he provokes a smile; his tune is like a diagram beside a flower.”¹

But the parson will do well to concentrate on the Mass as the service for which plain-song is peculiarly suitable, and also the one at which the present circumstances of the Church make the use of it most easy. All over the country the practice of singing the Mass is quietly but steadily growing (*Laus Deo!*). It is, as far as the present-day worshippers are concerned, an innovation, but one which is finding wider and wider acceptance; there are no traditions or prejudices with regard to the music to be overcome. Here, then, at the centre of the Church's worship is the place to instal the Church's music, the music that has grown up with the Liturgy, the music that is the music of prose, the music which is not primarily that of the choir, but the music of the clergy and of the people.²

While dealing with Catholic music it would be natural to say something of the music for the priest's part, which, by general consent, should be drawn

¹ *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. I, p. 53.

² Cf. K. Weinmann, *History of Church Music*.⁴ Ratisbon, Fr. Pustet, 1910, p. 17. “The ordinary of the Mass did not belong originally to the duties of the Schola Cantorum, but to the priests assisting at the altar and to the community in general. The singers did not assume possession of these pieces and change their original simple musical character until the tenth and eleventh century.”

from ancient sources, but the matter will be dealt with in a later chapter.

There is one other part of the service for which music of this character is natural and that is the Versicles and Responses. We are so accustomed to a version of the latter from which the *canto fermo* has disappeared, that we do not realize that plain-song was the basis. The most natural way to sing the Responses is to take them in unison to the old inflexions, which are published by the Plain-song and Mediæval Music Society.

Nothing is needed so much, as Mr. S. H. Nicholson said the other day, as a fixed set of Responses, issued by authority under the guidance of competent ecclesiastical musicians, which should be sung everywhere. It is just the part of the service in which a worshipper should be able to join vocally wherever he goes.

CHAPTER III

OF NATIONAL MUSIC

THERE is a Catholic music ; one that has a claim to the title because it has grown out of the words of the Liturgy, and has been wedded to them throughout the Christian centuries. It is the *cantus proprie ecclesiasticus*. That has been the theme of the last chapter, coupled with the plea that it remains as suitable to-day as ever it was. Are we then to conclude that no other music is to be heard in church ? Certainly if the choice has to be made between plain-song and nothing else, or "cathedral" music and nothing else, the writer knows which way his suffrage would go. But of course no such absurd alternative is necessary. The real question is not, "What music is to be exclusively used ?" or even, "What is to be the predominant music ?" so much as, "What is to be the basis on which our ecclesiastical song is to be built ? What is to supply the test by which the worshipper in the pew is, probably half-unconsciously to himself, to judge of the propriety of what he hears ?"

Is the foundation to be the sacred music of this island during the last two hundred years ? Or is it

to be the fashionable secular composer of the moment? Mr. Fuller-Maitland has pointed out how the Anglican revival produced "men who perpetrated weak imitations of Spohr or Gounod with the utmost complacency and pecuniary success," and anxiously fears that soon the popular anthem will be a colourable imitation of Debussy or Richard Strauss.

Are we to do these things? Should we not rather found the whole structure on the broad basis of the universal music of the Church? When that has been understood and loved, we can admit many other types by its side. Some, doubtless, of the things we love now will fade away under that clear light; but the good will remain.

And, as a matter of fact, the Church ever since the invention of music in parts has allowed its use, though grudgingly at first.

Descant, faux-bourbons, polyphony, all quickly became an accepted part of the Church's resources. Even the *Motu Proprio* of Pius X, which takes a strict line, and prescribes the Gregorian chant as the only thing for certain parts of the Liturgy, yet contemplates the use of other music as well. The rule which it lays down has a great deal to be said for it; "the more closely a composition for the Church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savour the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple."

But one striking fact about these developments is

worth attention. The periodic accent is still absent. An interesting suggestion as to the meaning of this absence is made by Sir Hubert Parry in the *Oxford History of Music*.¹ It is "the musical equivalent of the subjective attitude of the human creature in devotion, in which the powers of expression which belong to the body are as far as possible excluded. In other words the music represents the physical inactivity of a congregation in the act of Christian worship, wherein, unlike some Pagan religious ceremonies, muscular manifestations are excluded, and everything is confined to the activities of the inner man. This is the ultimate meaning of the exclusion of rhythm from the old Church music." He suggests that the subtlety with which this was done "is one of the most remarkable instances of the justness and consistency of unconscious instinct, when working undisturbed by things external to its real motives."

It will be seen as we proceed, that there is the great dividing line. It is not between the modes and the modern scales. Nor is it between harmonized and unharmonized music. It is in the passage from the static to the dynamic that the Rubicon is crossed. Periodic rhythm, with its suggestion of the dance or the march, has always been eyed suspiciously by strong bodies of Church opinion.

And at this stage it is safe to say that an education in the type of music from which this rhythm is absent is what is sorely needed to-day. Lack of appreciation of it is due to our defective sense of

¹ Vol. III, p. 5.

worship. Its restoration would go hand in hand with a broader and more just vision of the Glory of God.

If the parson feels this, he need not go only to plain-song to create the taste, though, perhaps, that is the easiest medium. He will find splendid examples in the polyphonic writers of our great English School ; Tallis, Byrd, Gibbons will supply him with examples. Perhaps the best method of approach is to administer the small doses of these writers which will be found in the settings of the canticles already referred to.¹ In using these he will still be in keeping with the spirit of Pius X's *Motu Proprio* which specially praises the classic polyphony ; and he will also be showing that in England there is no need to go to Italian sources, as the Pope, with the pardonable pride of an Italian Bishop, recommends.

For here we come on another principle which the parson may surely make his own. Once we travel outside the universal Catholic plain-chant of the Church, the most suitable source to go to is the music of the country. The English Church has, since the Reformation anyhow, regarded one of its chief glories to be the fact that it presents the One Faith through a national medium. If it was Catholic in the first place, it was English in the second. As it had its own variety of the Gothic style in architecture, its own form of Renaissance too, as it delighted to use the vulgar tongue, and in every way to appeal to the English mind, so it is natural

¹ P. 47.

that we should go to the national treasury of music to fill out what is lacking in the ancient plain-song.

This is no place to discuss the meaning of nationality in music. It is a controversy for the savants, and one in which they never cease to find delight. But the veriest amateur can detect that there is a broad difference between Rimsky-Korsakov or Borodin on the one hand, and Wagner or Brahms on the other. Some people are insensible to the existence of a national soul, or dispute its power of expressing itself in music. The only answer that the writer of this little book would make is to say, "Go to the Eisteddfod."

It is true that, amongst other things, the visitor will discover that not all the music of a nation has the stamp of nationality upon it. But there will be enough to show the understanding ear that here is the soul of a people. And it is a soul which is best expressed in those old hymn-tunes whose origin and authorship are unknown. Here is nationality, and good judges recognize its power even when they cannot analyse the cause. The last time the Eisteddfod was held at Aberystwyth a "Cymanfa Ganu," or hymn-singing festival, was held at the suggestion of Mr. Lloyd George. The Prime Minister, who was present on the occasion, described how he was once going through a number of Welsh hymn-tunes with Mr. Curwen, the initiator of the Tonic Sol-fa system. The latter said very decidedly, "I like best those by Ally Jimrig." "So do I," said Mr. Lloyd George, "but the gentleman you refer to does not exist. The name Alaw Cymraig

means old Welsh music." Mr. Curwen had no doubt detected a reality and depth in these folk melodies which was absent from those feeble imitations of poor English models, which, unfortunately, so often pass for Welsh.

In the English Church, then, it will be natural to supplement the Catholic music with English music. That at any rate should be the ideal which the parson should hold up before his organist. And, if the Catholic music is put in the first place, it can be done without any fear of ecclesiastical or musical chauvinism. And it will have the further advantage of giving the people the music which really has come out of the national soul. The delusion is still nursed by many that there is no English music. But as far back as the fifteenth century there was a definite English school. Mr. Wooldridge tells us how "in beauty, in sweetness and purity of sound . . . it by far exceeded that of the foreign schools, to whom indeed, as they themselves confessed, it came as a revelation."¹ Those were the days when an English composer, Dunstable, was able to teach the musicians of the Continent.

One great characteristic of all this early English music was its use of folk-song as a basis.² This, no doubt, gave it much of that simplicity and directness for which the critics praise it. England was a singing country, and the rich stores of its popular song were as much loved by the learned as the vulgar.

¹ *Oxford History of Music*, Vol. II, p. 167.

² Cf. e.g., Tye's adoption of the tune, "Westron Wynde," as the basis of one of his Masses.

When, then, the parson asks himself what in fact he is to use, the first thing that lies to his hand is Merbecke's setting of the Communion service. Here is something which in itself shows the vitality and ingenuity of English musicians. Some who love the true plain-song may feel it heavy and pedestrian in comparison. It is in itself a monument to the limitations of reformers. Cranmer, wearied, no doubt, "with the reports and repeatings," was all for simplification at any cost, and demanded that every syllable should have but one note, not realizing that a few passing notes not only add immensely to the grace of a melody, but even to ease of singing. Notwithstanding this limitation it must be confessed that Merbecke's work is extraordinarily successful. It has real melody; it has vigour; it is singable; it lets the words dominate; it does not pall with time or repetitions. And above all it allows you to sing Mass in forty-five minutes, if there be no sermon. Probably Merbecke, when he made his adaptation, had in mind the objects of the compilers of the First Prayer Book, namely, that there should be but one use throughout the whole kingdom, as for words so for music. It would be contrary to all the principles we have been laying down to demand that for Merbecke to-day. But surely this setting is a thing which every instructed Churchman ought to know, and it ought to be constantly performed in all churches. Its congregational character, liturgical propriety, and national origin alike commend it. We very badly need a setting of the Communion service, which can be used

for gatherings of the faithful from all parts, say at the cathedral or some central church, for a diocesan or other function, a setting in which all can join. Another need is for such days as Ascension Day or Patronal Festivals, when High Mass has to be at an early hour, when we wish to combine solemnity with the possibility of Communion, and at the same time be as economical of time as possible. Moreover, we very often do not want to have a choir at half-past six or seven. For all these purposes Merbecke is a godsend. All that is needed is two chanters to lead the singing. The congregation will do the rest for you.

But if all are to join with voice as well as with heart, it is necessary that we have a standard text. At present we are still hindered by the mangled form found in the Cathedral Prayer Book, for the decease of which all lovers of Church music should pray. However, Mr. E. G. P. Wyatt has given us a scholarly text which is published in a cheap form by Messrs. Mowbray, and which deserves to become the text used everywhere.¹

In addition to Merbecke the *Missa Regia*, edited by Mr. F. Burgess, may be mentioned. It is an interesting and early attempt to adapt the old plain-chant to the English Rite. There is also, of course, a considerable body of sixteenth-century English ecclesiastical music. Tye, Tallis, Sheppard,

¹ If accompaniments are wanted, Messrs. Curwen publish one by Mr. Martin Shaw, and Novello one by Mr. Royle Shore.

Taverner and others wrote splendid Masses, but very few have been arranged for the English service, and if they were, they would not be very suitable for ordinary churches, as, though in some plain-chant is interspersed, for the most part they are elaborate choral works, demanding a choir specially trained, and a congregation of an eclectic kind. But it does seem sad that they should not be heard at S. Paul's or the Abbey. Any objection that can be levelled against them would tell equally against Palestrina, which is done. That there are quite a number of Anglicans who would like to hear this kind of music at the Holy Sacrifice, and none the less because it happens to be English, can be proved by a glance round Westminster Cathedral when it is being rendered.¹

Of post-Reformation writers there are very few who composed settings of the whole of the Communion service till we come to the nineteenth century. It was the Catholic revival which created the demand. To satisfy it compositions have been poured out. But the contemplation of them causes depression rather than joy. Just as we all feel now that our glorious parish churches have suffered untold damage

¹ Cf. an interesting article in *The Times*, reprinted by the Church Music Society with the title Elizabethan Church Music, dealing with the work of Tallis, Byrd, Farrant and Gibbons, and the causes for their neglect. "If we as a nation have one fact in our musical history which we might blazon on our banners in the gate, it is the certainty that our Church music touched at one period the high-water mark of all Church music."

from the fury of the restorer, so the "High Church" music as a whole seems uninspired and pinchbeck. From the point of view of the ordinary parish priest who is seeking a setting for the Mass, this music as a whole suffers from one of two grave disadvantages. Either it is too elaborate and lengthy for the tolerance of an ordinary congregation, and allows them no place even in Creed or "*Gloria*," or, if it succeeds in being simple, it is only by becoming trivial. There seems to be a general consensus of opinion amongst those modern Church musicians whose judgment carries weight, that our greatest lack to-day is settings of the Communion service which are congregational, ecclesiastical in the best sense, and yet of this age. The Church Music Society, which is doing such a valuable work in the formation of public opinion, has found this matter one of the hardest to give advice about. And it is a crucial one. For, as has been already said, a sung Eucharist is rapidly growing in favour and coming more and more to occupy the place in the Church's worship which is its by right. This is an additional reason why it is necessary to lay so much stress on the use of plain-song. It is not only because it is so appropriate and beautiful in itself, and because it comes to us with so great a weight of authority; it is also because there is so little else that is worthy to stand by it.

And there is a further reason still. The Church should be the inspirer of the arts. This is especially true of music, in the progress of which she has played a great part in the past. But there is

something wrong if she does not continue to do so. The weakness of so much of the music that was written for the Church during the nineteenth century is that it was not inspired by the Church. It has not caught her accent. Indeed, it very often does not seem to be inspired by anything particularly, unless it be snatches of Mendelssohn or Brahms or Wagner. We want a new race of Church musicians to arise. They must be men who are Churchmen by conviction, men who love her faith and rites. By long familiarity with her ancient song and that classic polyphony of which the good Pius spoke, they will have caught her accent. But they must be also men of this age, responsive to the new forces of Christian life springing up all about us. They will then, like wise stewards, bring out of their treasures things new as well as old. And the new will not be overshadowed by the old, but will take its place proudly by the side of it, because it knows the rock from which it is hewn. It will have no fear that in turning the hearts of the children to their fathers, it is turning them away from God's message for to-day, nor despising the generations which are yet for to come.¹

¹ At the risk of seeming to speak well of one's friends, I would venture to say that Mr. Martin Shaw's two settings, "A Modal Communion Service" and "An Anglican Folk-Mass" do seem to fulfil the requirements we have been desiring. I do so because I have seen how a congregation learns to love them and sing them. No doubt there are others, which those more widely versed than I in modern Church music could name.

After the Communion service the parson's thoughts will turn to the Offices. For these there is an immense mass of material in our national storehouse of music. The Cathedral tradition has at any rate preserved the daily singing of the Offices, even though there is no Chapter Mass, and to provide for these a host of busy writers have wielded their pens, and, no doubt turned their pence. As far as volume is concerned it probably vies with the production of any other country in the way of ecclesiastical music. Amongst the mass of canticles and anthems which exist there are some which are magnificent. Wesley and Attwood are great names. So amongst moderns are Stanford and Parry and Charles Wood. They build on great models and build well. The acute writer of the Church Music Society's paper (No. 3), "Elizabethan Church Music," points out how, "from this great school there emerged a definite and persisting ecclesiastical style, altering, developing and absorbing such good points in secular music as seemed worthy of assimilation ; and that style can be traced, in a discouragingly thin line, down to the present day. It would be quite feasible to take one of our best examples of modern Church music, such as Stanford in A, and to trace its genealogy from Elizabethan times ; and there would be no bend sinister in its coat of arms. Equally feasible would it be to take an average modern specimen and to show that it displayed every characteristic shunned by the true ecclesiastical tradition."

But the main thing to be noted about all these

canticles and anthems is the fact that they are not congregational. They are meant to be listened to. If they are to be listened to with either pleasure or profit, they must be sung well. And so the parson has to keep his critical faculty wide awake, so that he may judge whether he has a choir capable of performing them. There is a great deal of pleasure to be derived from part-singing by moderate performers; but it is a pleasure which exclusively belongs to the singers themselves. They cannot expect even a tolerant audience to share it. If only this fact were recognized, we should be spared the miseries which at present are regarded as an inseparable part of harvest and other festivals. The organist says, poor man, that the choir must have these things to practise or they will not come. Very well, let them have them, let them practise them to their hearts' content. There is no reason why the choir should not be also a glee club, and, indeed, have quite a social life of its own in all kinds of ways. But why need they inflict their renderings on the wretched congregation? Or, if they must, might it not be at some recital or service of song which is subsequent to, and separate from the divine office?

But granted that the particular church possesses a choir capable of these things, it will still be important that the examples chosen shall be worthy; they must belong to that "discouragingly thin line," of which the writer just quoted speaks. As a guide in the matter of choice another publication of the Church Music Society will be valuable.¹

¹ Cf. *Occasional Papers*, "Anthems."

There is, however, a further question. Granted that good examples have been chosen, and granted, moreover, that the choir can do them justice, are there many churches where the congregation wishes Sunday after Sunday to listen to *Te Deum* or Our Lady's hymn, while they themselves preserve a stony silence? Surely not. Surely to the majority of worshippers they become an incredible weariness. There are occasions, such as days of ecclesiastical or national thanksgiving, when a greater splendour and richness seem to be called for. The fact that they are not the normal fare heightens the effectiveness of the use of "settings" at such times. But normally the congregation want something swiftly intelligible, and offering them a vocal share. This indeed is true even on the great occasions of communal rejoicing. When the mind is stirred and the heart is full, and gladness springs to the lips, it seems strangely unreal to stand up, while the choir performs an elaborate piece of music, which is supposed to be our vicarious praise. The years through which we have just lived have brought this home to us. Next to a satisfactory way of dealing with the Eucharist, it is perhaps the problem which presses hardest on those responsible for our Church music. Our musicians should turn their keenest attention to it. At such a time we need something big and impressive, as, in its own way, is Stanford in B flat.

But we need something in which we can join with voice as much as heart. Therefore, it must be simple and broad, easily remembered and widely

known. These last requirements are fulfilled by singing *Te Deum* to the 8th tone. But it lacks the thrill of a great occasion, and something more is needed. The proper Ambrosian melody is magnificent. But it is not easy for a congregation to sing. It has been said that there are places in France and Italy where such a result is achieved, but it will generally be found that it is at the cost of the true melody. So the problem remains unsolved. It awaits a genius.

With regard to all part-singing one simple rule may well be followed. You cannot perform it, if you lack the voices for any part. If a piece is written in four parts, you must have the singers to sustain the four parts, or you must leave it unsung. It is absurd to sing an anthem or "*Magnificat*" with the alto or tenor part omitted. Such a thing would not be tolerated for a minute in the concert-room, nor should it be in church.

Turning from anthems and "canticles," which naturally give great opportunity for the use of national music, the next part of the service is the Psalms. Reasons have already been given why in many places Anglican chants have to be suffered, reasons of sentiment and association rather than of an artistic character. But at this point a few words must be said with regard to another consideration. Anglican chants in the form that we know them are, as the name implies, an English product. They would then naturally seem to have a great claim on those who desire a free opportunity for the development of national music in connexion with

the worship of the Church. The most powerful advocate on these lines is Mr. Robert Bridges, whose articles on chanting in the Prayer-book Dictionary are classical. He claims there that his object is to consider how "our English Psalms can be best chanted to our national music" (p. 181). The same idea is emphasized on p. 176, where we are told that "there is now a sufficient body of dignified and almost romantic music to make the chanting of the Psalms, especially as rendered in our cathedrals, one of the most stable charms of our national service."

The articles should be closely studied by all upholders or users of the Anglican chant. The first thing that emerges from such a study is the extraordinary difficulty of singing the Psalms to Anglican chants, as most of us have already discovered from painful experience. The difficulty arises from the attempt to combine a very strong definite and rigid little tune with words that are written in prose. The difficulty is, of course, enormously increased by the harmonies. To sing recitative is hard enough anyhow, but to sing it in four parts is a miracle.

Of course, if, following the example of the person in *Alice in Wonderland* you [attempt to] "madly cram a right-hand foot into a left-hand shoe," and stretch or crush the words to fit the tune, all may be well. But we have seen how deep and fixed a liturgical principle it is that in the liturgy the words must dominate and shine through the music all the time. Dr. Bridges is a poet, and from that side this principle makes its appeal to him. He admits that

“ to subordinate the strong melody to the irregular rhythms of the prose Psalms is extremely difficult, and few choirs are skilled enough to attain much proficiency.”

The second thing that we discover, and one, indeed, that follows naturally from the last, is that Anglican chants must not be sung by the congregation. “ No precentor who has ever instructed a choir in good chanting would suppose it possible for a congregation to join in such singing.” If they desperately attempt to do so, “ all the musician can do is to play loudly on the organ.”

A third point of importance is that many of the most popular chants are, quite rightly, excluded by Dr. Bridges from the repertoire, on the ground that they are “ rowdy.” His example by Woodward is convincing.

It seems strange that anybody can have connected such things with the Psalms, or, indeed, with religion at all. There is, I venture to think, a place for “ rowdy ” music in worship, as will be shown later. But it must not be a rowdiness which exudes self-complacency, which is the real curse of so many Anglican chants. It is their smugness that makes them so depressing. But there are, as Dr. Bridges contends, beautiful Anglican chants, which are a part of the national heritage, and so in spite of their difficulty, it is right that the tradition should not be lost. But the places where they can rightly be sung are few and far between, if Dr. Bridges’ undeniable canons are to be maintained. Incidentally we may notice that the Poet Laureate says, “ the

plain-song chants are more suitable than Anglican chants for congregational singing," though he thinks they are not likely to become generally popular. We may venture the suggestion that if Dr. Bridges' requirements as to chanting are followed, and they are unquestionably right, the Anglican chant will be banished from hundreds of churches where it is now massacred. If the parson comes to the conclusion that he must have Anglican chants and do his best with them, he might at any rate aim at two things : (1) using only the best chants, which means as a general rule those that are least florid, and have the smallest intervals ; (2) letting the words dominate the chant, and to this end preventing hurry on the reciting note. Dr. Bridges says : " The words in recitation should be sung at the same pace as the words in melody ; the melody should have a slight tendency to be the quicker, as if the sense had escaped from bonds into freedom, rather than the reverse." Another point to be borne in mind is that, as has been said above, it is absurd to sing a four-part composition and leave out one of the parts. It is just the harmonies of an Anglican chant that help to relieve the weary monotony of its insistent little tune.

There still remains a musical part of the Church services which, though it is entirely unauthorized by the Prayer Book, is probably that part which means most to English people. The English, like the Welsh and the Germans, are a hymn-singing race, and to the average run of people in this country there are more sacred associations intertwined

with hymns and their tunes than there are with the Prayer Book itself, or possibly, even the Bible. Thus it is that hymn-tunes have formed the storm-centre of recent controversy as to Church music. It is here that the need for reform is greatest, just because of the profound influence of the hymn-tune. It is here, for the same reason, that it is hardest. What, then, is the parson to do? He wants to know what tunes to choose and what to avoid.

There are certain simple rules as to which there is general agreement.

(1) A tune should be able to stand on its own legs. That is to say, it must sound clear, decided and convincing when sung without harmonies. Its pattern may be very simple. But it must be definite; e.g., "Dundee" or "Winchester New" are simplicity itself, and they sound equally well when sung in unison or with simple harmonies, or with a faux-bourdon.

(2) It should not be sentimental. Just as the best hymns are those that turn our thoughts away from ourselves to God and His doings, so the best tunes are those which are least subjective in their feeling. The tune has as important an office in the creation of a broad, wholesome atmosphere as have the words. The more private emotions cannot well be expressed by the common song of large bodies of people, and this is especially true of the feelings of humiliation, abasement or yearning. The words that express these things may be read in private, or with a group of understanding friends. They are quickly tarnished when the fierce light of publicity

is turned upon them, and lead only to hypocrisy or nausea. It follows that tunes of that character must be sparingly used.

With these two tests in his hand, "strong melody" and "freedom from sentimentality," the parson can go through his book with a blue pencil, noting down the hymns which he is going to have often. Or if he wants to save himself the trouble he can get the admirable pamphlet on hymns published by the Church Music Society.

But even when he has got his list of strong and dignified tunes, there is another principle which he should apply, a principle which is the justification for considering hymns in this chapter.

Hymns are the popular part of the service, the point at which the soul of the people expresses itself in its own way. It is right that the actual Liturgy and the music wedded to it should have the universal accent of the Catholic Faith and the Holy Scriptures, but here a more particular or local element may well come in. This is not urged in any narrow or chauvinistic spirit. There are glorious tunes which may well be the heritage of the universal Church. This is especially, of course, the case with the plain-song melodies, such as *Pange lingua*, *Vexilla regis* or *Veni Creator*. But there is a profound connexion between the soul of a people and its music, and this should be consecrated in the service of God. And there is a further reason. We have urged that the Church composer who has soaked himself in plain-song will be the more likely to produce something which, while quite new and original, yet

belongs to the great tradition. And there is a similar reason for the cultivation of the old popular music. It will provide an atmosphere in which the composer will have caught the national spirit. We have seen already how the great composers of the past, like Tye, did this. Many of the greatest German chorales have the same origin. "Innsbruck" (*A. and M.* 86) is a folk-song, "*Isbruck, ich musz dich lassen*"; so "*Jesu, meine Freude*" is a love-song, "*Flora, meine Freude.*"

Great composers as often as not spring from the people. We want to provide an atmosphere in our churches where the children of England will grow up catching unconsciously from the music, as from the Liturgy, the Catholic and the national note.

Many have objected to the introduction of some of the folk-song tunes into *The English Hymnal*, on the ground of their secular association. There may be places where this holds with regard to some of them. In individual cases the secular association may be too strong. That may be the case even with a tune which, originally written for a hymn, has been perverted to baser use. I have been told, I do not know with what truth, that there are parts of Wales where it is impossible to sing that solemn and deeply-moving tune, "*Aberystwyth*," for similar reasons. In all these cases discretion must be employed. And after all was it not Wesley who said: "Why should the devil have all the best tunes?" Broadly speaking a folk-song element is invaluable; because in the main they are wholesome, honest and direct, the children of the open air

and not of the footlights or the Albert Hall. When we have composers who from childhood have been soaked in plain-song and folk-song, one may expect a brilliant renaissance of English Church music.

Sir Charles Stanford pleaded as far back as 1889 for the use of national folk-music in our elementary schools, on the ground that "without the foundation of such music no healthy taste can be fostered in the population." From all time it has been the germ from which great composers have come. He also points out elsewhere that Joachim once said, in explanation of the strange fact that the Jews do not possess one composer of absolutely the first rank, that "he thought it possible that this was due to their lack of a native soil, and of a folk-music emanating from it."

But if it be said that it is a pity to lose many, e.g., of the magnificent German tunes, the answer is to be found in the fact that the generality of people have not time to learn more than comparatively few melodies for use in church, and surely if anything has to be lost we should not sacrifice our own in favour of those of other countries. And this all the more for two salient reasons.

(1) We are unusually rich in national melodies, and because of the diversity of peoples in these islands these melodies represent differences of type and range, which constitute a league of nations in themselves. Sir Charles Stanford points out that there are two distinct schools, Saxon and Celtic, and four distinct styles, English, Welsh, Scotch, and Irish. "The English, strong, solid and straightforward ;

the Welsh, full of dash and go ; the Scotch, a mixture of the humorous and the poetic, full of strongly marked rhythms, dry and caustic at times, full of a quality which we can best term ' lilt ' ; the Irish, which to my mind, speaking as impartially as an Irishman can, is the most remarkable literature of folk-music in the world, there is no emotion with which it does not deal successfully, and none has more power of pathos or of fire." ¹

The truth of these statements can be tested by any one who will compare the following in *The English Hymnal*.

402, " Monk's Gate " (English), 401, " Cameronian Midnight Hymn " (Scotch), 490, " St. Columba " (Irish) 301, " Hyfrydol," or 424, " Gwalchmai " (Welsh).

By all means let us have a few German tunes, and also some of those splendid seventeenth-century French tunes, but let us look first of all to the rock whence we were hewn.

And there is a second reason which confirms this view.

(2) The German tunes, or the best of them, and, unfortunately, it is not the best that are best known, are exquisite, solemn, tender, but they are mighty difficult for English people to sing. Put it to the test. Try to make an English congregation sing " *Herzliebster Jesu*," or " *Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* " at anything like the proper tempo. The result is dismal ; they are magnificent, but they are German to the core. We can't do it. Perhaps we are not

¹ *Studies and Memories*, p. 55.

big enough round the middle. Anyhow our instinct is for something swifter, and less emphatic. It is not that the Englishman has no feeling for the solemn. Orlando Gibbons' "Songs" are proof enough that he has. But he expresses it differently.

Of course, it is not meant that the examples of our national music which we employ for our hymns should be entirely what are usually known as folk-tunes. We have in point of fact a succession of undoubted validity stretching almost down to modern times. There are the best of the old Psalm-tunes, still known and loved, such as "The Old Hundredth," "Winchester New," and "Dundee." The true dignity and rhythm of these will be much better appreciated if the initial and final note are kept in their original length, with the proviso that the tune as a whole must not be dragged or sung too slowly.

Then there are glorious melodies by Tallis and Gibbons, which are winning their way back again by their sheer merit. After them come Lawes and Carey, J. Clark, and Croft, and Webbe.

The Victorian age presents us with a sad decay. The influence of the drawing-room and the hothouse seem to cast a clammy miasma over even earnest and sincere people, or else a certain cheerful self-complacency reigns. Barnby and Dykes have ridden us too long. But they are doomed with their congeners. Our children will not submit for ever to the rule of their great-aunts, and the parson will be wise to assist them in their revolution. Not, however, of course, without a certain tenderness

towards the old. And, indeed, there are one or two tunes of Dykes' that may live. For he had sincerity.

NOTE.

Since it is still sometimes thought that a tepid appreciation of the work of Stainer, Dykes and Barnby is a kind of blasphemy [due to a double dose of original sin, or the prejudices of the mediævally minded ecclesiastic, the following quotation from Ernest Walker's *History of Music in England* (pp. 307-8) may not be out of place.

"The great bulk of the music that later Victorian composers have written for the services of the Anglican Church is something altogether *sui generis*; and the deepest impress upon it is not that of any Englishman, but of a foreigner attached to another creed. To Dykes, Barnby, and Stainer, Gounod, whether they fully recognized the fact or not, was an influence incomparably greater than Sebastian Wesley or Goss, though the latter, in his inferior moods, shows signs of the change of ideal; the methods of the '*Messe Solennelle*' and '*Nazareth*' are visible everywhere, but nevertheless the work is definitely, so to speak, non-mystical; it is Gounod's ideal in terms of Protestantism. . . .

"But in the hymns and services and anthems of Dykes and Barnby and Stainer there is not this conflict of styles; their work is all of a piece. No doubt Stainer, very much the most gifted of the three, could occasionally produce music of a different order, as, for instance, the picturesque and powerful opening section of the eight-part anthem '*I saw the Lord*'; but (as indeed the rest of this anthem exemplifies somewhat markedly) the effort was never long sustained. The general work of these three and their numerous followers is, as a matter of fact, remarkably homogeneous. The musical historians of centuries hence will be able to date things like the '*Sevenfold Amen*' or the tune of '*Lead, kindly light*,' within a decade or two

as infallibly as a skilled palæographer dates a mediæval MS. ; there has been no music like it before, and the signs of the times are showing fairly plainly that it is highly improbable that there will ever be music like it again. From the time of the appearance of *Hymns, Ancient and Modern*, in 1861, down to only a few years back, this style ruled English Church music almost unchallenged ; a few things here and there, a small handful by Parry, a larger handful by Stanford, and a certain number of works on the same lines by other, chiefly younger, men, did indeed herald the revolt which we are now beginning to see, but they were greatly overbalanced. The tide of sentimentalism was very strong while it flowed, and even now that it is ebbing it requires very careful watching ; but there is no doubt by now that English religious music has come safely through a period on which future historians will look back with the reverse of pride. We may now assume with considerable confidence that cheaply sugary harmony and palsied part-writing of the kind shown in the verse 'For the Lord is gracious' from the 'Jubilate' of Barnby's service in E will not again be imposed upon the world as typical English art."

CHAPTER IV

OF CLERGY, CHOIR AND PEOPLE

ONE of the most important principles to apply to the music of our services is the principle of balance. Liturgy is an art before it is a law, and the soul of art is proportion. "Contrast," says Fielding, "runs through all the works of the creation, and may probably have a large share in constituting in us the idea of all beauty, as well natural as artificial." Commonly, public worship suffers from monotony. There is no light and shade, no contrasts. How often is it just one steady, four-part roar from beginning to end, with the continuous obbligato of a relentless organ *mezzo-forte*.

If this sense of balance is to be achieved, it is important to recognize that according to established tradition there are no less than three sets of persons who have parts in public worship allotted to them : the clergy, the choir and the people ; and these different groups all find a place in the Book of Common Prayer.

Perhaps the best method will be to consider them

in turn and deal with the kind of music which should be allotted to each.

The moment we begin to do this we find, in spite of long tradition, that really the natural division is not into three groups, but into two. There is only one main distinction, and that is between clergy and people, and, indeed, that distinction almost disappears when we study the origin of the Divine Office. It sprang from gatherings of lay-people who came to church to sing Psalms and read the Bible. Very often there were no clergy present. One of their number would act as chanter and precent the Psalms; perhaps a reader would read the lections, though sometimes this was done by the Deacon as the Bishop's representative. Essentially, however, they were services of the people by the people. The instinct which inspired them was to give duties to as many different persons as possible, and thus emphasize at once the corporate character of the worship and the value placed upon each person's offering. This tradition no doubt came down from the family worship of pagan Latin religion, where everybody had their part in the whole. It was thoroughly congenial to the brotherly spirit of old Catholic Christianity, and remained throughout the Middle Ages as a feature of the performance of the Breviary among those conservators of ancient ways, the monastic orders. Dr. Frere¹ has pointed out that nearly fifty persons are needed properly to carry out festal Mattins on such a day as Christmas Day.

¹ *Principles of Religious Ceremonial*, p. 259.

When prayers came to be added to the Offices the clergy were called in, and a Bishop when a blessing was wanted at the end. The pious custom whereby groups of friends gathered in church to say Offices together in independence of the ministry of the clergy, persisted in this country until the time of the Reformation, so much so that an Italian visitor remarked with admiration in the fifteenth century: "If any one can read he takes his Office of our Lady with him, and says it *sotto voce* in church with some others, verse and verse about, as the religious orders do." ¹

The Divine Office, then, should always be considered as essentially a people's service, and one that for its proper performance requires a group of persons. The clergy supply certain extras, as it were.

When we turn to the Eucharist we find the same corporate idea prevails. It can only be properly celebrated by a number of people acting together, and each supplying their quota to the common whole, gosseller, epistler, the bearers of the cross, the incense and the lights. So that really the distinction between ministers and people, even here in the most sacerdotal of services, is worn very thin by the infinite gradation of functions.

All this is well worth keeping in mind when we are considering the relative duties of the clergy and the congregation with regard to the music.

For first it makes clear that all should bear their part. Singing which joins the whole body of the

¹ *Italian Relations* (Camden Society), p. 23.

faithful to the offering of the ministers is the normal or ideal plan.

The second thing is that the music should be distributed between clergy and people. This may be illustrated from the most ancient method of chanting, whereby a solo singer, the Deacon or some other, sang the actual Psalm, while the people responded with a refrain: a process which St. Augustine describes in the 9th book of the *Confessions*, when they are overcome with grief at his mother's death. "Evodius," he says, "took a Psalter and began to chant a Psalm, to which the whole household responded, 'Mercy and judgment will I sing unto thee, O Lord.' "

What, then, is the clerical part in the musical rendering of the Church's worship? First, plainly the actual prayers. The custom of assigning these to the chief minister, to whom the people make answer with "Amen," was one of the things which the New Israel inherited from the Old. It goes back, at any rate, to the Deuteronomic period, and is one of the first things to appear in the earliest accounts of Christian worship, as, e.g., in Justin Martyr's description of the Eucharist.

Secondly, the lections. The reading of passages from Scripture has always formed a part of Christian services from the first. The office of lector, or reader, is most ancient, and it is plain that the reading of the Sacred Books was an honourable function, though subordinate to that of the principal minister, whose duty it was to say the prayers. Gradually this office in the Mass was taken over

by the Deacon and the subdeacon. But it is interesting to note that there is still a reminiscence of their function. The rubrics (*Ritus celebrandi Missam* VI, 8)¹ lay down that if the Mass be sung without Deacon and subdeacon a lector may sing the epistle. This ancient Catholic custom survives in the Anglican Communion in the undoubted right of the Parish Clerk to read the Liturgical Epistle (cf. Atchley, *The Parish Clerk and His Right to Read the Liturgical Epistle*, by C. Atchley, Alcuin Club Tracts, IV).

How, then, are these prayers and lessons to be rendered? Are they to be said or sung? The answer to this question is not quite simple. But before discussing more precisely the meaning of saying and singing, two general principles may be affirmed.

(1) The rendering should be such as is in keeping with the solemnity of Divine worship.

(2) It should be intelligible to the hearers.

There exists in many quarters a strong prejudice against the "intoning," which is one of the fruits of the Catholic Revival that has become well nigh universal. And a demand is constantly heard for the use of the "natural" voice. When one thinks

¹ Si quandoque Celebrans cantat Missam sine Diacono et Subdiacono, Epistolam cantet in loco consueto aliquis Lector superpelliceo indutus, qui in fine non osculatur manum Celebrantis; Evangelium autem cantat ipse Celebrans ad cornu Evangelii, qui et in fine Missæ Cantet *Ite Missa est*, vel *Benedicamus Domino*, aut *Requiescant in pace*, pro temporis diversitate.

of the dreary and unintelligible sounds which are often dignified by the name of intoning, it is impossible not to sympathize with this reaction. But it is important to remember why the practice was revived after years of disuse. There is little doubt that it was due to a desire to escape from one of the terrors of early nineteenth-century religion, namely, the "preaching" of the prayers. We can easily picture the vulgarity and unreality which might result when a pompous or unctuous divine endeavoured to point the sacred words by importing into them what he was pleased to regard as the true expression. Anything must have seemed better than that. At any rate, intoning would exclude the intrusion of a vulgar personality on the most sacred moments of Divine worship. And so men welcomed the singing voice, and it became not only firmly, but fanatically, established.

However, the demon of unreality which had attended the "preaching" of the prayers still dogged the footsteps of the priest, and it is probably true to say that the remorseless monotoning of these latter days does account for much of the suggestion of unreality which seems to many to taint the Church service to-day.

Two points require recognition. First, that good reading is as rare and difficult as good singing, probably even more rare and more difficult. Bad singing is bad, but so is bad reading. And the plain fact is that many parsons enter on a work in which the use of the voice is of immense importance, without any adequate training whatsoever.

The modern actor or politician speaks badly enough. But he does, as a rule, devote some time and trouble to discovering how to manipulate the delicate organ, on the right use of which so much of the success of his work must necessarily depend. It is true that at the time of Ordination the budding Deacon is usually required to pass through some kind of test. But it is very often conducted by an examining chaplain whose own obvious ignorance of the art he professes to expound completely invalidates any criticisms he may offer.

The second point that has to be recognized is that the so-called "natural" voice is, in many of the circumstances in which its use is desired, not natural at all. It is not natural in the sense that it is the one which human beings have been led to use under these conditions, and it is not natural in view of what the situation requires. There is a curious prejudice among our fellow-countrymen in favour of what is casual, formless and unthought-out. Surely no other nation in the world would tolerate the kind of speech which public men, in all walks of life, inflict upon us in England, speeches which have no beginning, middle or end ; no form, no climax and, alas ! too often no conclusion. We seem to confuse unpreparedness with sincerity, and to identify unfinished sentences with the language of the heart. But false rhetoric does not do away with the need for the true. A like prejudice prevents us from realizing that the singing voice can be used as an instrument of reality just as much as the speaking one. Both really require

deliberate art in their employment. Each is as capable of being the vehicle of true expression as the other.

In deciding, then, which shall be used on any occasion let us recall our two canons. They are dignity and audibility. The first demands that there shall be a certain impersonality about the recitation of the prayers and even the reading of the lessons. This does not preclude the use of all expression. But such expression as is employed must be that of the reader rather than of the actor or the preacher. It must be consciously subordinated to a sense of the greatness of Him whom we address or in whose Name we read.

The second canon demands that the voice shall carry effectively all over the building. No doubt there are little churches where the ordinary spoken voice is really the natural one to use. It can easily be heard and followed. But even then it may be doubted whether the dignity of the service does not require at times a more solemn tone. In buildings of any size, however, solemnity and audibility alike require a sustained note. Only the most accomplished speakers dare venture on anything like a serious drop. Inevitably the voice will take something of a singing character. But the sustaining of one note for prayers and lessons is terribly monotonous. The principle of proportion must come in, and light and shade be acquired somehow. We can get help towards the solution of the problem by turning back to the examples of former ages. In this matter the Greek theatre

is most illuminating. Amongst other things it disposes of a convention which some would rigidly fix on the officiant in Divine worship, the convention which asserts that if some is sung, all must be sung, and that it is inartistic to do anything else. And so attempts are made to drive us to sing the "Comfortable Words," though the spoken voice is obviously the more suitable for that which is a kind of conclusion of the Absolution. Again, many a priest, destitute of ear or tone, is driven into singing the Versicles because the choir chant the Responses.

When we turn to a Greek play we find that it consists of three parts: dialogue, speeches in iambic metre, and lyrics. In Haigh's *Attic Theatre* (p. 268, third edition) we read: "The lyrical portions of a Greek play were almost always sung. . . . In general, it may be said that, both in tragedy and comedy, song was substituted for speech in those scenes where the emotions were deeply aroused, and found their fittest expression in music. In addition to the declamation of the ordinary dialogue and the singing of the lyrical passages, there was also a third mode of enunciation in use upon the Greek stage. It was called 'parakalogé,' and came half-way between speech on the one hand and song on the other. Its name was due to the fact that it was allied in character to 'katalogé,' or ordinary declamation. It corresponded closely to what is called recitative in modern music, and consisted in delivering the words in a sort of chant, to the accompaniment of a musical

instrument. On account of its intermediate character it was sometimes called 'speech' and sometimes 'song.' It was first invented by Archilochus, and employed by him in the delivery of his iambics, which were partly sung and partly given in recitative."

The "parakatalogé" must have been very much like what eighteenth-century musicians called *recitativo secco*, a form of song-speech, which was "supported simply on chords played by the harpsichord or any other instrument whose nature it is to strike chords of a more or less evanescent character," and was intended to "be sung at the same pace as an actor would speak the words in a play without music."¹

To what are we to suppose this development in the Greek drama was due? Was it not just the application of the two principles we have assumed, audibility and solemnity? We have to remember that the theatre of Dionysus was in the open air, and that there was room for 20,000 spectators. Moreover, there was a strong religious aspect to the Greek drama. Its characters were more than mere individuals. They had about them something universal. They were types of the struggles and sorrows of man. Hence we may well suppose that practical considerations combined with an instinct for the fitness of things to bring about the introduction of recitative.

It was no doubt the same combination of forces which led to the development of the tones for the

¹ E. J. Dent, *Mozart's Operas*, p. 66.

prayers and also for the lections in the Middle Ages. The Divine service demanded something universalizing, something which did not leave the congregation at the mercy of the individual reader. The sacred words must be solemn and, at the same time, they must be heard. These ancient tones form an excellent model of the way to solve the problem of song-speech. For their makers were masters in the art. They had a special name for the sacred recitative sung by the ministers. They called them *accentus* to distinguish them from *concentus*, by which they meant the melodically developed antiphons and responds, which were sung by the whole choir.

When we study the *accentus* we notice one significant fact, and that is the existence of inflexions at regular intervals. In fact, we might say, in the words of Dr. Frere, that the simplest method of singing a religious service, or part of one, may be described as "monotone with inflexions."¹ It is possible that this may not have been the earliest way, and that these inflexions belong to a period somewhat later than the first age. Dom Gatard says that since Latin was a language essentially melodic, the most simple reading would differ considerably from what is known as *tono recto*. Thus there were no musical formulas at first; "people were content with the melody contained in ordinary reading, and the intervals were undecided, like those of conversation."² That seems very probable. Amongst other

¹ Grove's *Dict. of Music*, Vol. II, p. 466.

² *Le Musique Gregorienne*, p. 29.

things, it explains the name *accentus*. For in this style the accent is the melody. Very early, however, certain inflexions became stereotyped, e.g., the simplest *Dominus vobiscum*. *Et cum spiritu tuo*, which is also the normal way of singing prayers, and moves on two notes only. Other examples are the Preface tone, and those for the lections, including the haunting cadence of the Epistle. The oldest *Sanctus* and *Agnus* are the same in principle, and so, indeed, are the Plain-song Creed and the most ancient setting of the *Gloria in Excelsis*. They all really belong to the psalmodic type. They are built round a dominant note, and have these recurring inflexions, an ascent at the beginning and a descent at the end, with a little variation half-way through the sentence, technically known as the mediation.

These represent the type of song-speech which is still most suitable. The monotone gives the solemnity and carrying power which is wanted; the inflexions prevent the monotone from becoming monotonous. It is difficult to exaggerate the difference in restfulness that will be imported into the service by so small a matter as an inflexion at the end of the prayers, followed by a return to the dominant for the Amen.

This *récitative*, then, we should maintain was the "natural" way of rendering the solemn prayers of the Eucharist and also the lessons read thereat. It is a subtle thing, and it has its own difficulties, but they are nothing compared with the difficulties of good reading. Of course, the priest must learn

how to breathe, and how to produce his voice. But he must do that anyhow. Once he has acquired some measure of proficiency in these, and learnt the actual notes of his inflexions by heart (he will never do them beautifully if he always has to have the notes in front of him), he had best put out of his head all notion that he is singing. He must think only of the words and let them shine through all the vocalizing. It seems a difficult thing to do, but it is not nearly so difficult as might be supposed, especially if the priest be no great singer, and so is not led away by a desire to show off his voice. The inflexions should be kept in a subordinate position and not enjoyed with too much gusto by the performer. They should seem to drop out and fade away like fairy sounds; except at the close of the Epistle and Gospel, where a *rallentando* seems natural.

The music of the Preface, and also the inflexions of the Collects, Epistle and Gospel will be found in a convenient form in *The English Liturgy* (cf. W. H. Frere, *Use of Sarum*, Vol. I, p. 266 ff.). If the Epistle and Gospel are not sung to the proper tones it seems better to read them in the speaking voice rather than to monotone them on one note without inflexions. In fact, monotoning without inflexions ought to be abolished everywhere and at all times. Its effect is little short of disastrous. A minor advantage that comes from always using an inflexion at the end of a prayer is that it provides a signal to the choir as to the place of the Amen, and avoids certain disastrous incursions on their

part before the conclusion of a prayer. If the Epistle and Gospel are read in the speaking voice, it would seem appropriate that the ascription of praise before the Gospel should be in the spoken voice also. There is no ancient authority for the ascription of praise after the Gospel. There are certain parts of the Eucharist which will always naturally be rendered in the speech voice, even when the rest is sung: These are the preparation (the Lord's Prayer, and the Prayer for Purity, and the Ten Commandments). "Let us pray," before the "Prayer for Church and King," is the natural place to begin the use of the singing voice. All will then be sung till the end of the Creed.

It is a moot point whether the prayer for the Church militant should be said or sung. Some regarding it as a disjointed part of the Canon would vote for the former ; others treating it as an entirely separate thing, having a peculiarly congregational character, and being moreover the resumption of the service after the breach caused by the notices and sermon, would regard singing as the most fitting use. All would be agreed that the Invitation, Confession, Absolution should be said in a "humble" speaking voice. But if that is so, surely, as was said above, the same line of thought would include the "Comfortable Words" under the same heading. Then the singing voice appropriately breaks out again at the *Sursum Corda*, and continues till the end of the *Sanctus*, or the *Benedictus qui venit* if that be sung, as seems most natural, immediately after the *Sanctus*.

There is an old tradition that the most solemn part of the service, the Prayer of Consecration, should always be said rather than sung, because of its peculiar awfulness. If that be recognised, it will carry with it the use of the speaking voice for the Prayer of Humble Access; and, indeed, that would be the natural thing to do, anyhow. It is interesting to notice that Luther's feeling for the sanctity of the Prayer of Consecration led him along an absolutely different road. He thought it so important and so sacred that he wanted it sung, and in one of his *Kirchenordnungen* set it himself to music, which was an adaptation of the ordinary Preface tone. The Lord's Prayer will, of course, be sung, as will the Prayer of Oblation, the *Gloria*, and any special prayer that is inserted between that and the Blessing. But the Blessing itself it seems most fitting to give in the spoken voice.

In the daily Office the spoken voice would seem appropriate up to the end of the first Lord's Prayer and after the third Collect. So much, then, for the clergy's part in the ordinary regular services.

Where do the people come in? Originally they shared with the clergy the right to sing the Ordinary or unchangeable part of the Mass, i.e., the *Kyrie*, *Sanctus* and *Agnus*, to which were added the *Gloria* and Creed, when in the eleventh century these were regularly incorporated into the Church's sacrifice. The original melodies for all these parts of the service are, therefore, simple inflexions such as anybody might join in. Bit by bit they were

stolen from the clergy and people by the choir of trained singers, and in consequence the chants naturally grew more elaborate, the older and simpler ones being left for ordinary days and Requiems.

But it is interesting to notice that while all the rest of the Ordinary of the Mass, the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, etc., gradually acquired a considerable variety of settings, one setting only of the Creed seems to have held the field. This Creed we still possess, and a very beautiful thing it is, not quite so easy perhaps as Merbecke, but more flowing and melodious. This retention of one melody is surely a very striking fact. It shows how strong was the feeling that, as they met week by week round the Church's altar, all should bear a common and vocal witness to their faith. Surely it is a lead to be followed. If we are asked, "What is the people's part in the Church's song?" let us answer first and all the time, "The Creed." And yet this is just the thing that the musician steals first. How contrary it is not only to liturgical tradition and common sense, but also to the real wishes of all keen Church-people. How sad it was at the service at the Anglo-Catholic Congress, when S. Alban's, Holborn, was filled with priests longing to testify to the Faith, and their mouths were closed while the choir sang an elaborate piece of music by a French and not very ecclesiastical writer! How much finer a Catholic instinct was shown a few days later when the Bishops assembled at Westminster for the opening Mass of the Lambeth Conference, sang as one man the Merbecke Creed, having with a wise

humility submitted first to a rehearsal by the organist in the Chapter House.

Surely every child in our Sunday Schools and Catechisms should be taught the Merbecke Creed from his or her earliest years. We put this first because it was written for our Prayer Book, also because it is the easiest. Thanks to Mr. E. G. Wyatt, we possess a trustworthy and convenient text which can be obtained from Mowbray's (price, 1*d.*). It is important, of course, that it should be taught in such a way that the children feel the swing of the thing. This will be achieved if the natural rhythm of the words be followed. It is a good plan for the instructor first to read the Creed rather deliberately in the speaking voice, giving the appropriate accentuation, and then make the class, whether they be young or old, do it as he has done. It is of the greatest importance to get into people's heads that the words are the first thing, and that they must shine through the music in these recitatives.

In village churches it may possibly be wise always to be content with the Merbecke Creed. But in larger churches a certain amount of variety may be welcomed. Then the Sarum Creed should find the next place, or one of those referred to in Chapter III.

But it is not at all a bad plan to do as our forefathers did, and stick to one Creed, even when changes are rung on the other parts of the service.

If we agree that the Creed is certainly the people's property it is not very easy to decide straight away which other parts of the service are to be

reserved to them. There is, of course, a great deal to be said from a liturgical and musical point of view for dispensing with a choir altogether, and entrusting the leading of the congregation to two capable singers.¹ Or, indeed, the clergyman himself, if he has a good voice and ear, can lead all the essential parts of the service except the *Kyrie* and *Agnus*. But in many churches a choir is inevitable, and, indeed, in some it may be a positive assistance to the worship.

The question has been asked: "How exactly are we to view the choir? Is it to be regarded as an extension of the sacred ministers? or is it rather the leader of the lay-folk's worship?" The question is interesting, but from the point of view we have been following not very important. For we have seen that originally the clergy themselves were the leaders of the music in the unchangeable parts of the service. Very early, however, the "*Schola*," or choir of trained singers, established for themselves a place in the Church's worship, a place which perhaps may be regarded as an extension of the sacred ministry, since they performed music to the honour and glory of God without the co-operation of the clergy or people. But a clear principle seems to emerge with regard to that which was assigned to them. Their special singing took place while the clergy were occupied in doing something which precluded them from joining in. Thus the Introit belonged to the choir, while the

¹ Such a service may be heard at the Grosvenor Chapel in London.

ministers were coming in, the Offertory while the Sacrifice was being prepared. The Offertory was a lengthy and, indeed, a somewhat noisy proceeding. For the whole people brought their offerings of bread and wine, as well as other things. It was a busy moment in the service, and there seems to have been an instinctive desire to cast a veil of decency over it by singing on the part of the choir. The same is true of the Communion. In early days the people made their communions during the Mass in large numbers, and so the choir had another chance.

The Gradual, or singing, between the Epistle and Gospel stands on rather a different footing. It was the point in the Eucharist where music was used from the earliest days.

But originally what happened was the singing of a Psalm by a solo-singer to which the people responded verse by verse with a refrain, much after the manner of Psalm cxxxvi. In course of time, however, the Gradual and its accompanying " *Alleluya* " became one of the choir's most splendid opportunities.

And so when we turn to tradition to help us to apportion the parts of the service between choir and people we find ourselves in a difficulty. For it was the *Proprium Missæ*, the variable parts, Introit, Gradual, Offertory and Communion, which fell to the trained singers. They were the essentially musical parts, and they have all disappeared from our Rite. The disappearance is natural. It is one of the penalties we have to pay for the fact

that our Prayer Book was composed at a time of liturgical ignorance and degradation in the Latin Church, a degradation partly due to the inroads which the professional musician had begun to make on the liturgical text. That Babylonish captivity of the Popes at Avignon has much to answer for, and not least the rending from the people of the Ordinary of the Mass in the interests of harmonized music. By the time of the Reformation "*Missa*" to the Church composer meant the Ordinary, the *Kyrie*, Creed, *Sanctus*, etc. The position is further complicated for us by the popular English devotion to hymns. A sung Eucharist without hymns is to us unthinkable, as it is to the Germans or Bohemians.

It is very interesting to trace the history of the use of hymns at Mass in these countries. Luther may or may not have begun it, for many of the religious Chorals were already known in Germany. But he gave it a great impetus, filled as he was with the desire to restore the Liturgy to the people. "I wish," he said, "we could have as many vernacular hymns as possible, which the people might sing during Mass either at the Gradual, or at the *Sanctus* and *Agnus*. For who can doubt that that belonged once to the whole people which now the choir alone sings." ¹ The national movement was too strong to be resisted even by the Catholics. The *Jesuit*, Contzen, in the early part of the seventeenth century, complains: "Luther's hymns have slain more souls than all the books and sermons."

¹ Cf. Formula Missæ of 1523.

Rome, however, has always looked askance at the introduction of vernacular hymns during Solemn Mass or Vespers.¹

We have a wonderful treasury of hymns, both words and music, at our disposal. How great in both kinds the last ten years have revealed. It would be folly not to use these stores of popular devotion in the services of the Church. Equally would it be folly to take them away from the people and hand them over to the choir.

But if the people are to be given hymns the difficulty then arises: What are you to give the choir to do? When you have a group of well-balanced and trained voices, it is natural that they should wish to make their special offering at some point in the service, and, as we have seen, there is good traditional support for so employing them. But if they are not to have the hymns, which have taken the part that anciently was theirs, and if still less are they to be allowed to annex the Ordinary, it seems a real difficulty to find them a

¹ Cf. Bull of Pius V (1570) which forbids additions to what is in the Missal. But in Bohemia feeling was too strong. In 1605 a Council at Prague approved of vernacular hymns in the Mass. In 1860 another Council at the same place *ordered* them to be used in the lesser solemnities of Divine service and the daily Offices. There is nothing, they say, which affects the mind so tenderly, or arouses so well the feelings of faith, love and compunction. Even at Mass suitable hymns may be sung. The same practice, of course, exists in Germany, though apparently not at Hochamt (Solemn Mass). Truly Luther and Huss did not live in vain.

place at all. A practical solution may be found in a compromise. The Creed should certainly always belong to the people. So should the Lord's Prayer. This, by the way, is another part of the service where one universally used setting would be of inestimable value, and a plea may be put in for the original Sarum form rather than the reduced Merbecke version. It is undoubtedly more beautiful and flowing, and really no harder to sing.

The *Gloria*, too, should be a genuine act of thanksgiving in which the people can join with heart and voice. Its position in our Rite is a stroke of genius. It forms a grand climax to the Eucharistic offering, and we ought to make the most of it. In all these the leading of the choir is, of course, of great value. But there are two points in the service which may well be treated as of the nature of anthems and handed over to the choir. They are moments of great solemnity, when the mind of the people turns more naturally to silent adoration rather than to vocal worship. Moreover, they are on their knees, which is not the best attitude for singing. These points are the *Sanctus* and the *Agnus*. Here are excellent opportunities for delicate part-singing, which will add greatly to the beauty and dignity of the service. The Communion hymn may well be treated in the same way. If it can be sung unaccompanied, so much the better. The length of the hymn should be adjusted to the amount of time required for the administration, and on no account should the ministers be kept waiting when they return to the altar.

There are two other parts of the service which may be left an open question, to be decided according to circumstances. The *Kyrie* may be treated as a simple response, and sung to the shortest and plainest melody, such as Dyce added to Merbecke, or as is to be found in Mr. Martin Shaw's Folk Mass. But there is a great deal to be said for simply saying them in the ordinary voice. In many small churches this is much the best way. A musical phrase repeated ten times in a rather dragging fashion gives a bad start to a service.

It looks as though the day were coming when the Ten Commandments would drop out of the Eucharist. It is much to be hoped that the liturgical instinct of the English Church will be strong enough to resist the attempt to put in its place our Lord's summary of the Law, an expedient dear to the minds of "liberal" and academic persons, though, of course, it spoils the whole sequence of the lessons, being in fact inevitably a "Gospel" before "The Gospel." If we are successful in this resistance it is to be hoped that we may be allowed to have the Ninefold *Kyrie* once more. It would be far more in harmony with the spirit of the age than the Ten Commandments. No doubt the sixteenth-century reformers regarded them as "vain repetitions." But the ascending fervour of their humble cry comes home to us with a greater poignancy than the Law of Israel. For that, wonderful as it is, bears its date upon its face. But *Kyrie Eleison Christe Eleison* is of all the ages. When that day comes, if it does, the choir will have the chance of

a fine piece of service. There is nothing more haunting and unearthly than the old plain-song settings. They raise the worshipping soul straight into the courts of Heaven. But they require a finished performance. There are also many polyphonic settings which are wonderful, though they incline to be over-long.

There is another part of the service which is not provided for in our Prayer Book, though it was recognized in that of 1549. An Introit of some kind is a practical necessity. It seems entirely fitting that the ministers should enter and take their place at the altar to the accompaniment of song, as since the earliest days they have always done.

Probably in many churches a hymn forms the best Introit. But a plea must be put in for the traditional Psalm verses and antiphons. A glance at the collection for all the Sundays and other festivals of the Church, which is to be found at the end of *The English Hymnal*, will satisfy any one that we have there at any rate an extraordinarily beautiful and appropriate selection of sacred words, handed down to us from our fathers.

The proper music, edited by Dr. G. H. Palmer with his accustomed accuracy and taste, is published at Wantage. Much of it is extraordinarily beautiful, though the interest is uneven. There are probably few parish churches where the whole cycle of the year could be sung. The people would never get to know them, and they would seem difficult and remote. But the use of one for Advent,

a couple for Lent, and two or three for the Sundays after Trinity, while the Christmas and Easter ones are retained throughout those seasons, forms a useful compromise. The Asperges makes a convenient Introit at any time, but perhaps especially in Lent. It is simple, easily remembered, and hauntingly beautiful.

It is much to be wished, however, that some modern musician, who has soaked himself in the old tradition without losing the capacity for speaking to people to-day, would take the words of the Introits and clothe them with settings which would bring out their beauty and make our present congregations want to sing them.

Along the lines indicated, the proper balance between clergy, choir and people, and also between singing and saying, may be sought, and the Eucharist gain in richness of expression. The same principle can be applied to the Divine Office. The main purpose here is praise and edification, and the backbone of it is the Psalms and Lessons. Are the Psalms to belong to the people or the choir? If Anglican chants are used, as has been said above, we are bound almost perforce to hand them over to the choir, if the due respect for words and music is to be observed. The chanting, e.g., at King's College, Cambridge, shows what a beautiful thing this treatment may be. If, however, the Psalms are sung to the plain-chant, every alternate verse may be assigned to the congregation. If this is done, the organist should recognize that he is aiming at something different from a choir effect. A

number of people scattered about a church cannot be made to sing so delicately or swiftly as a small body of voices close to the instrument, and it is useless, as well as inartistic, to try to do it. A broader style must be aimed at, and the voices must be supported and persuaded, rather than bullied or dragged along by the nose. The pointing presents further difficulties, but these may be got over by the employment of selected Psalms, a comparatively small number, with which the congregation may get thoroughly familiar. The Table of Lessons, arranged in accordance with Report No. 501 of the Convocation of Canterbury, and published by the S.P.C.K., which also has special Psalms for all the Sundays of the year, will be found useful here.

Whatever decision is taken about the Psalms, whether they be assigned to the choir or the congregation, the latter should, at any rate, be encouraged to take their part in the Responses. They should, therefore, be sung at a pitch and in a form which makes this possible. Tallis's Responses, whether in the degraded condition which is best known, or in their genuine magnificence as given, e.g., in the Church Music Society's Choir Book, do not conform to this requirement. The same Choir Book contains also a simple harmonized version of Merbecke's setting taken from the *Booke of Common Praier Noted* (1550), which would be a very serviceable form for many choirs. The Creed and the Lord's Prayer have their proper inflexions, which should always be used when these are monotoned.

But an even more convenient form of the same ancient setting of "The Responses at Morning and Evening Prayer" is also published as a leaflet (price 1½*d.*) by the Church Music Society. It is without harmonies, and has a simple and suitable accompaniment. It would be a great gain were this adopted in all village and small town churches. In some notes which Dr. Frere appends, the excellent suggestion is made that the monotone should be discarded for the Creed and Lord's Prayer, in accordance with ancient precedent. It is preferable, both on devotional and on artistic grounds, to say these quietly in the natural voice. "All worshippers are then able to join in saying them, and a good contrast with the recitation is secured." Dr. Frere points out that "the use of the natural voice throws into relief the sung Versicle, 'The Lord be with you,' which follows, and is the beginning of a fresh section of the service."

The principle of balance will be further satisfied if, for all the introductory matter, from the Sentence to the Lord's Prayer, the speaking voice be employed. "O Lord open thou our lips" then acquires a new meaning, and the structure of the service stands out. It is unfortunate that the Church Music Society's Choir Book suggests that this introductory matter should be monotoned. That may be necessary in very large buildings; in ordinary churches the speaking voice is much more suitable. Monotoning, without inflexions, as has been said above, is a thing always to be avoided.

The prayers after the anthem may be said even

when the Office is sung. Then the service ends on the quiet note with which it began.

The same principle of balance may be applied to hymns. With the possible exception of that sung during the Communion, they are obviously a part of the service which belongs to the people. But even so there is no need for them to be sung from start to finish in one roar. Unison singing is undoubtedly the right way of treating hymns under most circumstances. Exceptional people like the Welsh may be sufficiently familiar with the parts to make harmony possible, and even beautiful. But normal congregations will obtain a better result by sticking solidly to the tune. When this is done the choir can introduce a pleasing variety (a) by singing certain verses in harmony unaccompanied ; (b) by the use of *faux-bourçons*.

The sound of the boys singing above the melody is thrilling, and helps many people to realize harmony for the first time. It is important that the congregation should hold fast to the tune, and sing it vigorously, or the effect may be lost. The best results may be obtained at a meeting where some well-known hymn like "Winchester Old" is being sung by a really large number of voices, for then the *faux-bourçon* of the choir, though audible, becomes clearly subordinate.

Some fine old examples will be found in *The English Hymnal*, and some modern ones of great interest in the *Tenor Tune Book*, published by the Faith Press.

A word may perhaps be said at this point about the musical rendering of the Litany. The Litany

is the normal English Sunday morning procession, and when it is treated as such gains enormously in significance, becoming in fact a new thing. A station should be made under the Rood after the supplications, and at the beginning of the anthem, "O Lord, Arise," the procession up into the choir resumed. When the music of the old Sarum Litany is used, the meaning of all this will be readily seen. The music has been published by the Plain-song and Mediæval Music Society, price 4*d*. The people's part will be found in a convenient form in *Diocesan Music for Congregational Singing*, edited by Mr. Royle Shore, and published by Novello for 2*d*. It also contains the Responses to the Cranmer Litany and the Ambrosian *Te Deum*. The proper rendering of the *Te Deum*, it may be said in passing, is an unsolved problem. The Ambrosian setting is fine, but not easily got hold of. The simple plain-song version is beautiful and easier. Neither, however, seems quite adequate to those occasions of solemn thanksgiving, when everybody feels that *Te Deum Laudamus* is just what they want to sing. Still less does it seem adequate for the congregation to stand while the choir sings Stanford in B Flat, inspiriting though its strains are.

If everybody could be made to know the Ambrosian form by heart, the result would almost certainly be magnificent. But the enterprise seems a desperate one. Meanwhile, we are left, as has been said, with an unsolved problem, and composers are presented with a splendid opportunity of fame and national service.

We have been thinking of the relative parts to be assigned to the choir and the congregation. But before we leave the subject there is one element in the success of any attempt to keep the balance between the two which the parson would do well to keep steadily in view. It is a simple point really. But neglect of it continually ruins the best intention and efforts. It is this: the priest must quite definitely make up his mind which parts of the service are to be assigned to which group of persons, and he must instruct his organist accordingly. And the organist must never let go the distinction. The accompaniment of a congregation is an entirely different thing from accompanying a small body of trained voices. It seems an elementary observation to make. But it is remarkable how few seem to realize it. It is very difficult to persuade an organist that a crowd will probably find the *tempo* that suits it, and that will give the finest effect. If they show a tendency to drag they must be wheedled out of it, not bludgeoned. Otherwise the artistic effect is ruined, to say nothing of the injury done to the temper. Above all, the player must forget that he has ever known an instrument called a metronome.

LAST WORD

IT is possible that the reader, if he survives to this point, may begin to say that what is wanted is not books on Church Music, least of all perhaps this one, but systematic teaching and study. If he does, the writer would support his proposal with both hands. No art can be taught from books. The living voice, the personal factor, wealth of illustration in the way of practical examples, these are the essentials of life and progress.

All that would be urged is that certain principles have got to be recognized. They may have been obscurely or ill-expressed in these pages ; but they cannot be put on one side as the fancies of one pedantic or disordered brain. They have been reached through the constant intercourse of a number of minds extending over a period of years. No one, save the author, is responsible for any actual statement in the book ; but it may be said that he has made it his aim to set down nothing just because it was a personal fancy. He has always tried to keep before him the kind of judgment that would be likely to be passed upon any point by a majority of that group of friends with whom

it has been his privilege to work, of any one of whom it may be truly said that he is more fitted to have written this book than he who has actually done so. With what success they must judge.

One thing is certain, the sense of dissatisfaction with things as they are is spreading; and it is fortunately matched by a growing vision of the great possibilities which may be ours, if we can only seize our opportunity.

But there is one great obstacle in the way. Until it is recognized and dealt with, no real advance can be made. It is this: at present neither priest nor organist has received any adequate training for his task. Nor can he; for none is provided. What the Church of England needs is a *Schola Cantorum*; or an institution where the mind of the Church on the matter is studied in all its implications, studied and clearly expressed; a place where music is treated as a mode of the worship of Almighty God, and where that is felt to be so fine and glorious a thing that the greatest musicians would think it to be a privilege to lend their aid in furthering its work; a place moreover, where, just because the rites and the tradition of the Christian religion are understood and loved, those to whom God has given the creative touch of genius may find an inspiration, and feel sure of a welcome, even when they venture out into paths untried before.

The teachers in it must first of all be thoroughly conversant with the great achievements of the past. They must be in touch with the needs which

the Catholic Church has always had to meet, the Faith that it stands for, the Liturgy by which it prays, and the life that it exists to promote. There must be no blinking of the fact that there are theological and religious demands which stand first in the order of requirements. But there must be at the same time a knowledge of the art of music, accurate, sympathetic and wide, which will ensure to the composer and to the performer that security of free development which he needs, if his gift is to flourish.

The report on "The Worship of the Church," which was one of the fruits of the National Mission, recognized that there was a problem. The authors saw that the present confusion springs partly from the absence of a clear and generally recognized ideal, and partly from the lack of training of organist and priest. "The need," they say, "is strongly felt of a higher standard of musical education in the clergy and of a fuller training for the church choirmaster in the requirements of their profession."

Who, then, is to take the first step? There are a number of excellent musical colleges in England, the technical discipline of which is probably equal to, if not better than, those of any other country. But they are not to blame for what is wrong, nor can they initiate reform. The report to which reference has been made puts matters in their right order. Education is imperative. But education in what? Not only in the training of the choir to sing, still less in the acquirement of a brilliant

technique upon the organ.¹ No ! What is wanted is education with regard to “ a clear and generally recognized ideal ” of what Church Music should be.

And where is that to come from, if not from the Church itself ? What we would plead for, then, is the summoning by the Archbishops of another committee to carry a stage further the good work initiated by the one they appointed on “ The Worship of the Church.” It should confine itself to the task of formulating the ideal of the Church with regard to the music of worship, and the best means for carrying out that ideal.

Changes are going on in the methods and curricula both of our theological colleges and of our musical academies. Now, while things are on the move, and men are willing to consider new possibilities, is the time to strike.

The Church has more liturgical scholars and more devoted and alive musicians than she ever had. They would be only too glad to lend their aid. We may be sure their united labours would be blest.

¹ Would it not be wholly a gain, if we could give up thinking of our church-musician as “ organist,” and call him “ choirmaster ” instead ? His first duty is to make people sing, not to play upon an instrument.

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